

JOANNES SAMBUCUS
AND THE LEARNED IMAGE

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JOANNES SAMBUCUS
AND THE LEARNED IMAGE

The Use of the Emblem in Late-Renaissance Humanism

BY

A.S.Q. VISSER



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Cover illustration: *pictura* of the emblem 'Usus, non lectio prudentes facit' from Joannes Sambucus, *Emblemata cum aliquot nummis [...]* (Antwerp: C. Plantin, 1564), p. 62. (Private collection; photo: Geert Janssen).

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PRINTED IN THE NETHERLANDS

For my parents,
for C.A. Bos

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*Ne cuius credas: mores, Arnolde, vetustos
Cum libris frustra quaerimus orbe levi.*

Joannes Sambucus, 'Sapientia insipiens',
Emblemata (Antwerp: C. Plantin, 1566), p. 88.

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A.S.Q.V.

St Andrews
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INTRODUCTION

The practical relevance of learning was clearly of great concern to the Hungarian humanist Joannes Sambucus (1531–1584). In his *Emblemata* he devoted quite a number of emblems to underscore the importance of applying knowledge in everyday life. One example in this respect is particularly charming (fig. 1). It recounts the amazing skills of the legendary Greek artist Myrmeceides, who could produce microscopic artefacts: a four-horse chariot, for instance, that was smaller than a fly, or a ship that easily matched the size of a bee. Dexterous, but absurd craftsmanship, Sambucus judges in the epigram of the emblem ‘Molestia vana’ (Pointless nuisance [27]): ‘What does it help the artist to be excellent in this kind of work if it is of no use, if it even escapes your eyes?’¹

Sambucus wrote his Latin emblems for the learned inhabitants of the world of Renaissance humanism. This particular emblem is moreover dedicated to Michael Sophianus, a Greek scholar of some fame. When read from the perspective of the dedicatee it gains a metaphorical sense that is often found more explicitly in Sambucus’ other emblems: books should not only be read, wisdom is not to be found in books alone and knowledge should be applied in real life.² As a philological craftsman with experience in microscopic textual problems, Sophianus would certainly have appreciated this slightly subversive bit of teasing. Of course, Sambucus had a vested interest in promoting the practical use of learning. As a teacher, physician, philologist and historian, in short, as an active humanist, Sambucus tried to earn a living from the relevance of his erudition. Seen from this perspective, the emblem engages not only in literary entertainment, but also indirectly issues a statement about the usefulness of emblems.

¹ “Quid iuvat artifice tantum valuisse labore, / ni prosint, oculos effugiantque tuos?” Throughout this study the numbers accompanying Sambucus’ emblems refer to Joannes Sambucus, *Emblemata et aliquot nummi antiqui operis* [. . .] (Antwerp: C. Plantin, 1566). See the discussion of the editions later in the introduction.

² See for example the emblems ‘Usus libri, non lectio prudentes facit’ (The use of books, not reading makes sagacious [56]) and ‘Sapientia insipiens’ (Unwise wisdom [88]).



Fig. 1. 'Molestia vana' (Pointless nuisance [27]) voices a pragmatic attitude towards humanist learning and presents an elegant bit of teasing to the dedicatee, Michael Sophianus.

For at least two reasons the emblem seems to have been a particularly attractive literary form for the sixteenth-century humanist. In the first place, the form offered the opportunity to address a broad readership (within the limits of the Latin reading community) in ways that were both playful and instructive. Its comprehensive use of classical sources in short entities made the emblem the perfect medium to present the attractions of classical learning, and indeed of the learned author. Similar to the unillustrated epigram, the emblem was a highly flexible, multi-purpose form, which could equally well serve patronage relations, scholarly friendship as didactic contexts.

Apart from the functionality, the new bimedial form set a great artistic challenge to the humanist. The use of visible images added an almost philosophical dimension to the poetical principle of imitation. Thus, the emblem enabled the humanist to mix classical literature, scientific knowledge (from ancient sources as well as empirical) and symbolic imagery in his creative ambition to emulate his predecessors.

For the same reasons these emblems constitute an important source for the study of sixteenth-century humanism and the development of the emblem. Both as an expression of a humanist mentality and as an instrument of the scholar in a social context, the emblem can help to chart the cultural history of the early modern Republic of Letters. Moreover, as precursors of much of the vernacular emblem production, an analysis of the humanist emblem can help us better to understand the development, transformation and diversification of the genre. As I hope to show, Sambucus' *Emblemata* is a particularly attractive case for these purposes. Before introducing the subject in more detail, I want to situate it in the development of modern emblem research.

In spite of the pioneering role of humanists in developing the emblem into a literary genre, Neo-Latin emblem books are still fairly under-represented in modern emblem studies. Since Praz's seminal assessment of the genre, a great deal of scholarly attention has been devoted to the (genesis of the) emblems of Andrea Alciato and the theoretical foundations of the genre.³ Many bibliographic explorations have revealed the practical difficulties in defining this diversified field

³ Mario Praz, *Studies in Seventeenth-Century Imagery* (Rome, 1964). For modern scholarship into Alciato see, William S. Heckscher, *The Princeton Alciati Companion. A*

of literature.⁴ More recently, the vernacular emblem traditions in France, Britain and the Netherlands have been the subject of systematic studies.⁵

On the basis of this region-oriented research it has gradually become possible to situate the production of emblems in a European development. However, many emblem books, and Neo-Latin examples in particular, transcend geographical borders, being produced for an international readership, often by a team with different regional backgrounds, and distributed all over Europe at the Frankfurt book fairs. In other cases it is simply impossible to define distinct regions or countries. Therefore, national boundaries are now often replaced as parameters of research by a variety of more specific historical

Glossary of Neo-Latin Words and Phrases Used by Andrea Alciati and the Emblem Book Writers of His Time, Including a Bibliography of Secondary Sources Relevant to the Study of Alciati's Emblems (New York-London, 1989); Bernhard F. Scholz, "The 1531 Augsburg Edition of Alciati's *Emblemata*: A Survey of Research," *Emblematica* 5,2 (1991), 213–254; furthermore, more recently, the issue of *Emblematica* entirely devoted to Alciati's emblems and their context, *Emblematica* 9,2 (1995) and the introduction by Pierre Laurens to the facsimile edition of Alciati, *Emblemata* (Lyon: Macé Bonhomme, 1551; Paris, 1997).

⁴ About the complexity of bibliography of the genre, see Peter Daly, "The Bibliographic Basis for Emblem Studies," *Emblematica* 8,1 (1994), 151–175, and Karel Porteman's review of John Landwehr, *Emblem and Fable Books Printed in the Low Countries, 1542–1813. A Bibliography* (Utrecht, 1988) in *Emblematica* 4,1 (1989), 211–215.

⁵ For French emblem books, see the bibliography of secondary literature by Laurence Grove and Daniel Russell, *The French Emblem: Bibliography of Secondary Sources* (Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance 342) (Geneva, 2000) and the monumental bibliography of primary sources by Alison Adams, Stephen Rawles and Alison Saunders (eds.), *A Bibliography of French Emblem Books of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance, 331 and 362) 2 vols. (Geneva, 1999–2002). Furthermore, see in particular Adams, *Webs of Allusion. French Protestant Emblem Books of the Sixteenth Century* (Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance, 378) (Geneva, 2003); Russell, *The Emblem and Device in France* (Lexington, 1985) and *Emblematic Structures in Renaissance French Culture* (Toronto, 1995); Alison Saunders, *The Sixteenth-Century French Emblem Book. A Decorative and Useful Genre* (Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance 224) (Geneva, 1988) and *The Seventeenth-Century French Emblem Book. A Study in Diversity* (Travaux du Grand Siècle 18) (Geneva, 2000). For the English emblem tradition, see the bibliography of secondary literature by Peter M. Daly and Mary V. Silcox, *The Modern Critical Reception of the English Emblem* (Munich, 1991), and especially Michael Bath, *Speaking Pictures. English Emblem Books and Renaissance Culture* (London-New York, 1994). For the Dutch emblem book production, see the seminal work of Karel Porteman, *Inleiding tot de Nederlandse Emblemataliteratuur* (Groningen, 1977), the issue of *Emblematica* 8,2 (1994), which is entirely devoted to the Dutch emblem, John Manning, Karel Porteman, Marc van Vaecck (eds.), *The Emblem Tradition and the Low Countries. Selected Papers of the Leuven International Emblem Conference 18–23 August, 1996* (Imago Figurata Studies 1b) (Turnhout, 1999), and A. Adams and M. van der Weij (eds.), *Emblems of the Low Countries. A Book Historical Perspective* (Glasgow, 2003).

contexts and supranational, literary discourses. The increased attention to the emblem production of the Jesuits illustrates this trend, as does the large electronic edition programme of Dutch love emblems.⁶ Similarly, the humanist emblem can best be approached as a product of a particular culture and mentality, in this case that of the scholarly oriented Republic of Letters.

Before the humanist emblem could be studied as such, however, some fundamental research still needs to be undertaken. While the emblems of Alciato have received ample attention, many of the later books are only studied in an introductory way.⁷ Although Henkel and Schöne have made a wide selection of these emblems accessible, few Neo-Latin emblem books, and not even Alciato's, have received a critical edition with a full, systematic commentary.⁸ Thus, the tools required for investigating a humanist emblem discourse are still lacking, which makes it difficult to give a generic assessment of emblematic intertextuality (investigating, for instance, the presence of Alciato in later emblems); nor is it possible to sketch some common

⁶ About this development, see Bart Westerweel (ed.), *Anglo-Dutch Relations in the Field of the Emblem* (Leiden, 1997), pp. ix, xix; Wolfgang Harms and Dietmar Peil in the introduction to *Polyvalenz und Multifunktionalität der Emblemik*, (Mikrokosmos. Beiträge zur Literaturwissenschaft und Bedeutungsforschung 65) vol. 1 (Frankfurt am Main, 2002), esp. pp. 3–8. For the research in the Jesuit emblem, see the massive bibliographic project set up by Peter Daly and Richard Dimler, *Corpus Librorum Emblematum. The Jesuit Series*, (Montreal, 1997–), in which so far three volumes have appeared; see furthermore the studies of Porteman, *Emblematic Exhibitions (Affixiones) at the Brussels Jesuit College (1630–1685): A Study of the Commemorative Manuscripts* (Turnhout-Brussels, 1996); John Manning, Marc Van Vaecck (eds.), *The Jesuits and the Emblem Tradition. Selected Papers of the Leuven International Emblem Conference 18–23 August, 1996* (Imago Figurata Studies 1a) (Turnhout, 1999); P.M. Daly, G.R. Dimler and R. Haub (eds.), *Emblemik und Kunst der Jesuiten in Bayern: Einfluss und Wirkung* (Imago Figurata Studies 3) (Turnhout, 2000), and the recent edition of the French version of Hugo's *Pia desideria*, A. Guiderdoni (ed.), *Recueil d'emblèmes des Pieux Désirs de Herman Hugo (Anvers, 1627) Facsimile des poèmes avec introduction, index et glossaire* (Imago Figurata Editions 2) (Turnhout, 2004). For the electronic edition of Dutch love emblems by Peter Boot and Els Stronks, see <http://emblems.let.uu.nl/emblems>.

⁷ For studies in humanist emblem books, see Holger Homann, *Studien zur Emblemik des 16. Jahrhunderts*, Sebastian Brandt, Andrea Alciati, Johannes Sambucus, Matthias Holtzwardt, Nicolaus Tawellus (Utrecht, 1971), and Karl A.E. Enekel and Arnoud S.Q. Visser (eds.), *Mundus Emblematicus. Studies in Neo-Latin Emblem Books* (Imago Figurata Studies 4) (Turnhout, 2003).

⁸ Arthur Henkel and Albrecht Schöne, *Emblemata. Handbuch zur Sinnbildkunst des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts*, (Stuttgart, 1967); on the selection criteria, see esp. p. xxi and chapter seven, pp. 217–218; for an edition of Alciato's emblems with some notes on the text see the facsimile of the edition Lyons, 1550 edited by Betty Knott and John Manning (Aldershot, 1996).

poetical contours of the humanist emblem, despite much research into theorising texts, such as prefaces.⁹ Once more detailed studies of the particular collections have been carried out, a broader scope is possible, and important new questions can be addressed, such as those concerning the relationship between the Neo-Latin emblem and the religious debates of the Reformation.

The present book is meant as a contribution to this development of research, by investigating Joannes Sambucus' emblem book and the historical and literary contexts in which it was produced. The aim is twofold: first, to offer an analysis of the forms and functions of this particular humanist emblem book and, secondly, to suggest, by means of this analysis, a contextualised and production-oriented method for emblem research.

Method and Structure of this Study

In order to reach this goal, a set of basic questions must be addressed: what are Sambucus' emblems like? How are they constructed? What could have been the reasons for making the book? What are the backgrounds against which the book could be understood better?

Some of these issues are quite problematic, due to the fact that the literary category of the emblem has no clear definition. The variety of forms and the historical development of the emblem make it almost impossible to grasp the notion in a coherent theoretical framework.¹⁰ Therefore the emblem should never be studied as an isolated literary phenomenon, but should always be embedded in its various cultural and historical contexts. Departing from this pragmatic point of view, a historical contextualisation is the central principle of this study. This automatically implies a re-evaluation of some of the modern conceptions of the emblem. Today's well-rounded view on the genre is radically different from the perspective the makers of Sambucus' collection must have had. The reconstruction of this perspective not only modifies the idea of an emblematic unity

⁹ See for instance Peter M. Daly and John Manning (eds.), *Aspects of Renaissance and Baroque Symbol Theory 1500–1700* (New York, 1999).

¹⁰ See the lucid introduction into this problem by John Manning, *The Emblem* (London, 2002), pp. 13–36.

between word and image, but also sharpens our understanding of the functionality of the emblem in the humanist Republic of Letters.

The seven chapters have been arranged in such a way that the historical contexts may form the basis for an analysis of the emblems. The first four chapters form the referential part of the book, starting with an exploration of the historical backgrounds of the producers of the emblem book in chapters one and two. In doing this, not the emblems, but the author and the publisher will be the point of departure. Chapters three and four will then focus on two particular contexts of the work itself. In the next three chapters the literary analysis will be based on the order of composition and production. Since in Sambucus' case the epigrams are the basis of the emblematic invention, these will first be considered separately, in comparison to those of his important predecessors, Alciato and Bocchi. After investigating Sambucus' use of classical sources, the relation between the epigrams and the *picturae* will be assessed in the final chapter.

Evidently, this study cannot claim to offer an exhaustive treatment of Sambucus' emblems. A selection has been made of those themes and examples that may serve as a new step towards a wider ranging treatment of the Neo-Latin emblem production. This means that the focus is directed towards locating the work in its contexts, rather than investigating the richness and tradition of literary motifs or iconographical topoi *per se*. Another restriction in the span of this investigation concerns Sambucus' *Nachleben*. The reception of the Latin emblems in the later emblem tradition, including the Dutch and French translations of Sambucus' collection and those reworked into English by Geoffrey Whitney, is largely beyond the scope of this study.¹¹

¹¹ For the Dutch and French translations, see Karel Porteman, "Miscellanea emblematica," *Spiegel der letteren*, 17 (1975), 180–188; "The Earliest Reception of the 'Ars Emblematica' in Dutch: An Investigation into Preliminary Matters," in *The European Emblem. Selected Papers from the Glasgow Conference 11–14 August, 1987*, ed. B.F. Scholz, M. Bath, D. Weston (Leiden, 1990), pp. 33–53, and Alison Adams, "Jacques Grévin and his Translation of Sambucus' *Emblemata*," *De Gulden Passer* 75 (1997), 139–182; for the use of Sambucus' emblems by Whitney, see Gábor Tüskés, "Imitation and Adaptation in Late Humanist Emblematic Poetry: Zsámboky (Sambucus) and Whitney," *Emblematica* 11 (2001), 261–292. For an interesting case of reception of Sambucus' emblems on a series of tapestries in Hatfield House, England, see Peter M. Daly's review of the facsimile of the 1566 edition, *Emblematica* 13 (2003), 376–381.

Joannes Sambucus, *Emblemata*

For an investigation into the humanist emblem, the collection of the Hungarian humanist Joannes Sambucus (fig. 2) presents a particularly inspiring example. First published by Christopher Plantin in Antwerp in 1564, the *Emblemata cum aliquot nummis* constitutes one of the largest and most influential specimens of the genre at an early stage of its development. Apart from the collection of emblems, the work contains a preface, ‘De emblemate’, constituting the first prose introduction to the emblem. The social context of the book is reflected in a large number of dedications, indicating Sambucus’ network in the scholarly community and at the Habsburg court. In addition, the book ends with a section containing illustrations of ancient coins, which clearly caters to the growing antiquarian interest of humanists at the time.

Except for some introductory studies and three facsimile editions, the emblems have received no systematic scholarly attention so far.¹² Most attention has been focused on the theoretical aspects of Sambucus’ preface, which has been edited no less than three times.¹³ Moreover, there are promising primary sources available to study the emblems and their various contexts. Sambucus’ correspondence has been edited and also the administration of the publishing firm of Christopher

¹² Holger Homann, “Johannes Sambucus,” in his *Studien zur Emblemik des 16. Jahrhunderts*, Sebastian Brandt, Andrea Alciati, Johannes Sambucus, Matthias Holtzwardt, Nicolaus Taurellus (Utrecht, 1971), pp. 43–78; August Buck, “Leben und Werk des Joannes Sambucus (Zsámboky János),” introduction to facsimile reproduction of the 1564 edition of Sambucus’ *Emblemata* (Budapest, 1982); L. Voet en G. Persoons (eds.), “De emblemata van Joannes Sambucus: reproductie van de Latijnse editie van 1564 en de tekst van de Nederlandse vertaling van 1566 en de Franse van 1567,” *De Gulden Passer* 58–60 (1984), I:5–16, II:5–32; Wolfgang Harms and Ulla-Britta Küchen, “Nachwort,” to the enlarged 1566 edition (*Emblematisches Cabinet*) (Hildesheim, 2002), pp. 273–293; Werner Waterschoot, “Lucas d’Heere und Johannes Sambucus,” in *The Emblem in Renaissance and Baroque Europe. Tradition and Variety. Selected Papers of the Glasgow International Emblem Conference 13–17 August, 1990*, ed. A. Adams, A.J. Harper (Leiden, 1992), pp. 45–52.

¹³ Denis L. Drysdall, “Joannes Sambucus, ‘De Emblemate’ (text and translation),” *Emblematica*, 5,1 (1991) 114–115; Othon Scholer, “Ein Text hart wie ein Diamant oder De Emblemate des Joannes Sambucus Tirnaviensis,” *Etudes classiques, publiés par le Centre Universitaire de Luxembourg V* (1993), 69–209; Ari Wesseling, “Testing Modern Emblem Theory: the Earliest Views of the Genre (1564–1566),” in *The Emblem Tradition and the Low Countries. Selected Papers of the Leuven International Emblem Conference 18–23 August, 1996*, ed. John Manning, Karel Porteman, Marc van Vaeck (*Imago Figurata Studies* 1b) (Turnhout, 1999), pp. 3–22.



Fig. 2. Portrait of Sambucus and his dog Bombo in the second edition of the *Emblemata*. In the first edition Sambucus had already dedicated an emblem to his dogs, 'Fidei canum exemplum' (An example of the loyalty of dogs [143]), see fig. 7.

Plantin has been preserved in the archives of the Plantin-Moretus Museum in Antwerp, offering a unique opportunity to investigate the work from a book historical perspective.¹⁴

What, then, do the emblems have to offer? In keeping with Horace's well-known rule, in general Sambucus meant his emblems 'to instruct and to delight.' The *Emblemata* present a form of learned amusement full of rhetorical wit and sophisticated allusions, but never without conveying a practical moral lesson as well. In the actual emblems this poetical programme could take a large variety of shapes. It is precisely this richness in form and content that characterises the collection as a whole. Only the general format of Sambucus' emblems remains the same throughout the collection. Each emblem has a tripartite structure, consisting of a motto (or *inscriptio*), a *pictura* and an epigram (or *subscriptio*). The epigrams vary in length and the text is moulded in all sorts of different metrical patterns.¹⁵

The subjects that are addressed represent a microcosm in themselves. Seemingly without a specific thematic order, the collection of emblems deals with an abundance of symbols and signs. Apart from the world of classical mythology and ancient history, all sorts of natural phenomena are featured, ranging from the oak tree to the bird of paradise. Medical explanations of jaundice, for instance, or the bubonic plague are used to illustrate moral lessons on particular virtues or vices. Apart from personal morals social and political issues are also addressed, reflecting fragments of the historical situation in Europe at the time.

The tenor of the emblem is always moralistic, but it is usually presented in a sophisticated and sometimes enigmatic way. With a witty pun, an inventive metaphor, a charming anecdote, or an erudite allusion Sambucus tries to create a playful effect, which is enhanced by the presence of an illustration. It is difficult, however, to establish the relationship between the textual parts and the *pictura* in general terms. This depends on the perspective from which

¹⁴ Hans Gerstinger and Anton Vantuch, *Die Briefe des Johannes Sambucus (Šamboky) 1554–1584. Mit einem Anhang die Sambucusbriefe im Kreisarchiv von Tmava von Anton Vantuch* (Sitzungsberichte der Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse 255) (1968).

¹⁵ One exception in this respect is the last emblem of the collection. This emblem, that compares sophistry to croaking frogs, lacks a motto. A more extensive discussion of the variety in the epigrams is given in chapter five.

it is analysed and even then it differs per case, ranging from a connection in which one part illustrates the other to more dynamic forms of interaction. In the emblem about Myrmecides, for instance, the *pictura* paradoxically has to represent objects “that escape the eyes.”

On the whole, the themes in the emblems reflect the author’s scholarly world. The emblems about reading books or medical topics testify to this, as does the concentration on classical sources. Furthermore, Sambucus’ work is evidently coloured by his personal background, being a Hungarian at a particularly difficult time in the history of the nation, and by his activities as a physician and a Greek scholar who aspired to gain an influential position at the Habsburg court.

The Editions of the *Emblemata*

The genesis of the emblem book can actually be reconstructed in some detail, with the help of Sambucus’ correspondence and the administration of Plantin’s business.¹⁶ The first indication of Sambucus’ work on the emblems is a letter to the French diplomat and numismatist Henri de Mesmes, dating from Sambucus’ stay in Paris during the years 1561–1562. Sambucus here writes that he is “putting the finishing touches to a certain booklet” which will be dedicated to de Mesmes.¹⁷

Plantin’s involvement in the production of the emblems seems to have come at a rather late stage. In the autumn of 1563, Sambucus

¹⁶ The most detailed account of the genesis of the editions of Sambucus’ emblem book is given by Max Rooses, “De Plantijnsche uitgaven van ‘Emblemata Joannis Sambuci’,” *Het Boek. Tijdschrift voor Boek- en Bibliotheekwezen* 1 (1903), 3–15; see furthermore Leon Voet, *The Plantin Press (1555–1589). A Bibliography of the Works Printed and Published by Christopher Plantin at Antwerp and Leiden* 7 vols. (Amsterdam, 1980–1983), pp. 2025–2039, nos. 2168–2174.

¹⁷ Gerstinger and Vantuch, *Die Briefe*, pp. 56–57, no. vi: “Et laboro nunc in quodam libello perpoliando, cuius editionem cum tuo nomine si patiere, in vulgus dabo [. . .]”; the dedication suggested here probably refers to the numismatic appendix, which would eventually be dedicated to Grolier in the *Emblemata*; in the emblem section ‘Tempestiva prosunt’ (The seasonable is useful [117]) was dedicated to de Mesmes. For the reconstruction of the approximate date of this letter, see Endre Bach, *Un humaniste hongrois en France. Jean Sambucus et ses relations littéraires (1551–1584)*, (*Etudes Françaises*, 5) (Szeged, 1932), p. 58.

apparently planned to have his book published by the relatively unknown Antwerp publisher-bookseller Libertus Malcotius.¹⁸ This may be inferred from Sambucus' letter to the renowned cartographer Abraham Ortelius (here addressed as 'Cosmographus') dated 22 September, 1563.¹⁹ It is his first letter explicitly mentioning the term 'emblem':

Mi Abrahamae, dic Bibliopolae Liberto, ut errata et indicem missum statim meo libello adiciat et quatuor in corio ligata exemplaria mittat ad hospitium rosae Gandavum; ego pretium persolvam. Dic illi quoque me iam in Emblematum argumento versari et propediem aliquid ostensurum.²⁰

(Dear Abraham, tell bookseller Libertus, to add to my booklet the corrections and the index immediately and to send me four copies bound in leather, addressed to the inn of the Rose in Gent; I will pay the costs. Tell him also that I am working on the subject of the Emblems, and that I will soon show something.)

Apparently, Ortelius served as the intermediary between Sambucus and Malcotius. The latter had recently published a new edition of Sambucus' dialogue on ciceronian style, *De Imitatione a Cicerone petenda dialogi III* (1563).²¹ The request for a copy of 'my book' refers to this work. The work on the subject of the emblems may well indicate the writing of the preface.

The subsequent stages in the preparations for the publication can then be reconstructed as follows: in the summer of 1563 Sambucus commissioned the design of the illustrations to Lucas d'Heere.²² At that time, Sambucus stayed in Gent, which strongly suggests that he at least met the artist, and possibly advised him on the designs.²³

¹⁸ Malcotius was working as a printer and publisher in Louvain and Antwerp from 1563–1574; see A. Rouzet, *Dictionnaire des imprimeurs, libraires et éditeurs des XV^e et XVI siècles dans les limites géographiques de la Belgique actuelle* (Nieuwkoop, 1975), s.v.; see Waterschoot, "Lucas d'Heere und Johannes Sambucus," pp. 45–52.

¹⁹ This is the first reference to Ortelius as a cartographer, see J. Werner, P. Herweijer, *Abraham Ortelius (1527–1598): aartsvader van onze atlas* (Amsterdam, 1998), p. 15.

²⁰ Gerstinger, *Die Briefe*, no. x, p. 64.

²¹ About Sambucus' order of four copies bound in leather: It is not clear whether this means that Sambucus had to pay for his own books, or that he paid for the bindings. Perhaps Sambucus ordered the copies in addition to author's copies.

²² For Lucas d'Heere, see Werner Waterschoot, "Leven en betekenis van Lucas d'Heere," *Verslagen en mededelingen van de Koninklijke Academie voor Nederlandse Taal- en Letterkunde* (1974), 16–126.

²³ See Waterschoot, "Lucas d'Heere und Johannes Sambucus," pp. 45–52. See the analysis of the relation between epigrams and *picturae* in chapter 7.

Malcotius was planned to be the publisher of the book. In October, Plantin, who had just returned from Paris, must have entered the stage. It is unclear whether Sambucus and Plantin already knew each other from their years in Paris. It is also impossible to tell who brought the two together in the production of the *Emblemata*. There is only the first reference to Sambucus' emblems in Plantin's accounts on November 4, 1563.²⁴ From this time onwards, Plantin took care of the production process. He employed the woodcutters, Gerard Jansen van Kampen, Cornelis Muller and Arnold Nicolai, to produce the blocks with the illustrations. He applied for a printing licence that was granted to him in January 1564. It was also Plantin who set out the printing policy: new editions (among which a Dutch and a French translation of the book) were first and foremost his responsibility.

From 1564 to 1599 Sambucus' emblems went through six Latin editions. The first edition appeared at the end of August 1564 and was entitled *Emblemata cum aliquot nummis antiqui operis, Ioannis Sambuci Trnaviensis Pannonii*, literally signifying "Emblems and some ancient coins by Joannes Sambucus from Trnava in Hungary" (fig. 3). The book is an impressive example of Plantin's typographical skills. It is printed in octavo, comprises 240 pages and is, apart from the emblematic *picturae*, lavishly decorated. Each of the 167 emblems starts on a new page, with the woodcut *pictura* set in an exquisitely decorated woodcut border. The text is set in italic roman letters.²⁵

The emblems are preceded by the usual preliminaries. These include the colophon, an illustrated title page and a portrait of the author, and the preface, dated Gent, 1 January 1564. The title page is printed within a woodcut border with pictures of coins of the nine muses. The coins depicted, though not in all respects accurately, are the silver denarii issued by Quintus Pompeius Musa in 67 B.C.²⁶

²⁴ Voet, *The Golden Compasses. The History of the House Plantin-Moretus*, vol. 1: *Christophe Plantin and the Moretus: Their Lives and their World* (Amsterdam, 1969), p. 40, with a reference to Arch. 36, folio 18vo. But his accounts start in October.

²⁵ See for an extensive bibliographic description Voet, *Plantin Press*, no. 2168. I count all the illustrated poems included as emblems. For a discussion of a more restrictive approach to the concept of the emblem, see pp. 216–218. The illustration to 'Nihil negligendum' (Nothing should be neglected, in this edition p. 205) is erroneously also printed in 'Vel minima offendunt' (Even small things harm, in this edition p. 64).

²⁶ H.A. Seaby, *Roman Silver Coins* vol. I, revised by D.R. Sear and R. Loosley (London, 1978³), pp. 77–79.

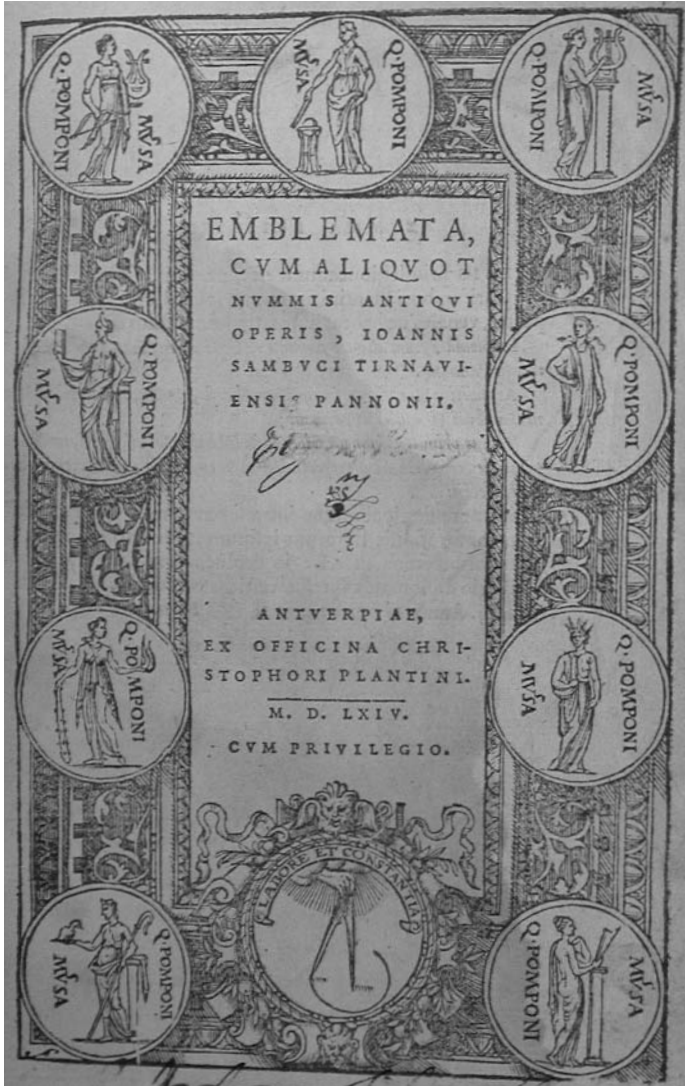


Fig. 3. Title page of the first edition. The woodcut border represents the nine muses, fashioned after the silver denarii issued by Quintus Pomponius Musa in 67 B.C.

With the title page the book aptly suggests the world of antiquarian pursuit and symbolical reading presented in the emblems. Moreover, it also refers to the numismatic interest of the work. At the end of the book a separate section follows with woodcuts of 23 coins, mostly of ancient origin. Sambucus dedicated this section to the French book collector and royal treasurer Jean Grolier (the letter of dedication being dated Gent, 7 January 1564).

In 1566 Plantin published the second edition of the collection, entitled *Emblemata et aliquot nummi antiqui operis [. . .] altera editio. Cum emendatione et auctario copioso ipsius auctoris*.²⁷ This edition contains 56 new emblems, enlarging the collection of emblems to a total of 223. Again the book was printed in octavo. The preliminaries contain a new portrait of Sambucus, portraying the humanist with his dog (see fig. 2). The text of the introduction has some minor corrections. In the main section the order of the original emblems has not been changed and the new ones are simply added to the collection. The original borders of the *picturae* have been replaced by typographical fleurons. The *picturae* of the new emblems were designed by Pieter van der Borcht, one of Plantin's regular designers, in this case almost certainly without any personal contact between author and illustrator. Furthermore, the section of ancient coins at the end of the book is expanded with another 22 illustrations. Another addition is a new section at the end of the book, comprising 47 epigrams taken from Sambucus' collection of poems, originally published in Padua in 1555.²⁸ Being the most complete version, this 1566 edition of the *Emblemata* will be used as the standard edition in this study.²⁹

²⁷ See also Voet, *Plantin Press*, no. 2169.

²⁸ Sambucus, *Poemata quaedam [. . .]* (Padua: G. Perchacinus, 1555). In the *Emblemata* the epigrams are printed on pp. 257–272.

²⁹ Unless specified otherwise, all references to the emblems are drawn from this edition. A concordance of the emblems in the different editions is given in appendix I, pp. 263–268. The 1566 edition is also accessible in facsimile (eds. Harms and Küchen, Hildesheim, 2002), and furthermore used by Henkel and Schöne in their *Emblemata*, with the full text and German translations to 186 of the emblems. In all quotations from Sambucus' emblems I have moderately adapted the spelling and punctuation to modern standards. Ligatures have been solved throughout the text, accents are removed, and the punctuation has been adapted when necessary (in general: less commas, and frequently substituting colons by comma's or semi-colons; see Edwin Rabbie, "Editing Neo-Latin Texts," *Editio. International Yearbook of Scholarly Editing* (Tübingen, 1996), 25–48, esp. pp. 30–36). The translations accompanying the quotations are my own, unless stated otherwise. They are in prose and merely intended to follow the Latin text as closely as possible.

The third edition of the Latin text appeared in 1569. Although the title page again promises a significantly enlarged and revised version (“Cum emendatione et auctario copioso”) the collection has not in fact undergone significant changes. One emblem, an *epithalamium* dedicated to a Gent couple, is left out bringing the total collection to 222 emblems. The format of the book is changed, however, to the smaller 16° size. As a result of this, the *picturae* are not printed within borders. Furthermore, the order of the emblems has been adapted. Technically, this makes it the last restructured and corrected version of the emblems even though the text does not show any considerable changes compared to the previous edition.

In later editions of Sambucus’ *Emblemata* the form and contents were not changed. The 1569-edition was reprinted in the same form in 1576, 1584 and 1599. The 1584-edition was published in Leiden, by Plantin’s office there, but some copies of this edition bear the imprint of the Antwerp branch. Franciscus Raphelengius, Plantin’s son-in-law who had taken over the business in Leiden, prepared a final edition of the book in 1599.

Apart from the Latin editions Plantin also published two translations of the emblems, one in Dutch and one in French. For the Dutch translation Plantin commissioned Marcus Antonius Gillis van Diest. The Parisian doctor Jacques Grévin took care of the French translation. Both editions, printed in 16°, were produced in 1566. However, the title page of the French edition gives 1567, possibly in order to allow for the time needed to distribute this export product.³⁰ As was said previously, the translated editions were evidently directed towards a different audience, with a different way of addressing the readers in the preliminaries. For the Dutch version, Gillis van Diest composed a preface that was more attuned to the new readership, while Plantin took care of this for the French translation.

³⁰ Voet and Persoons, “De emblemata van Joannes Sambucus,” part 1, pp. 13–14.

CHAPTER ONE

THE WORLD OF THE AUTHOR

In trying to recapture the historical figure Joannes Sambucus (János Zsámboky), the modern historian is confronted with a by no means unequivocal relationship between an author and his works. The person behind the literary testimonies, including his correspondence, is at least evasive and often purposely fashioned. In addition to this, the historian's judgement is easily coloured by modern interests, as for instance, the emblematic fusion of word and image. Sambucus himself would probably have been surprised about, possibly even slightly annoyed by the dominance of the *Emblemata* over his reputation. There is no trace that the emblems were regarded as his most important achievement in his life-time. His activities as a book collector, as a (Hungarian) historian, philologist and physician would be more obvious constituents of his self-image.

Determining the relationship between Sambucus' life and the *Emblemata* is furthermore complicated by the active role of the emblem book as an image-builder. A case in point is the emblem 'Neminem sors continet sua' (Nobody is restrained by his own circumstances [77]), dealing with the human inclination to be discontented with one's personal situation (fig. 4).

Sambucus dedicates this emblem to himself. The combination of the address and the theme of the emblem suggests a personal confession. If this is the case, to what kind of discontent does Sambucus admit? The selected examples all illustrate discontent with professional life: the businessman is tired of his life and wants to become a soldier, while the soldier prefers to be a businessman. Similarly, scholars dream of a farmer's life in the country, while peasants, in their turn, envy those who can stay inside, and are not dependent on the weather. However, the argument continues, changing places would be a silly idea:

Quod si caelestes illorum vota, phrenesim
Audirent, rueret subito in contraria vulgus.
Idem eadem reprobant, properis mutantur et horis. (lines 14–16)

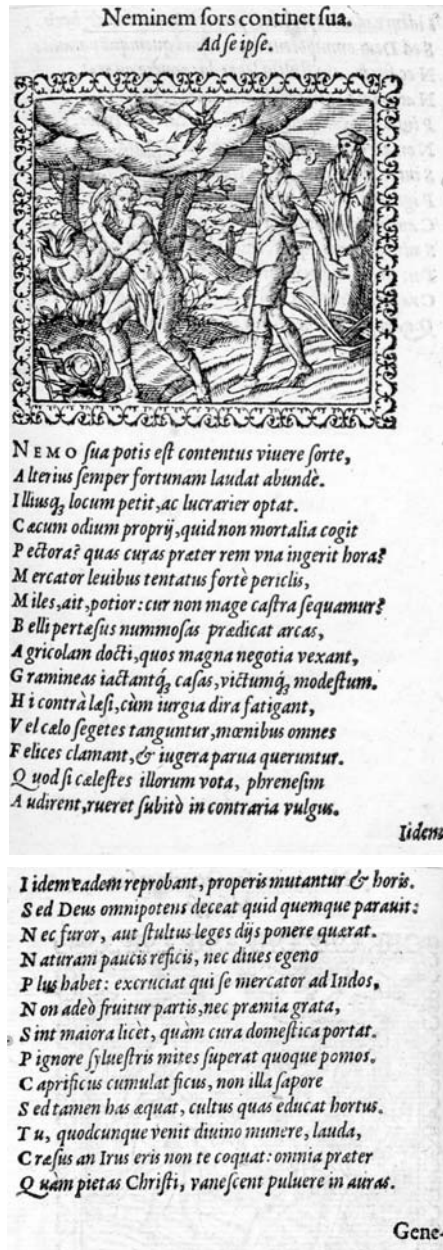


Fig. 4. In 'Neminem sors continet sua' (Nobody is restrained by his own circumstances [77]) Sambucus presents himself as a humanist by profession.

(If the gods would hear their prayers, sheer madness, people would immediately dive into the opposite job. The same people would then reject the same jobs and change hastily from hour to hour.)

Rather, the emblem teaches that one should be content with the fate that was brought upon him by God Himself. Or, to rephrase in line with the dedication: “you, Sambucus, should praise whatever has come upon you by divine gift, whether you shall be a Croesus or an Irus,” i.e. extremely wealthy or impoverished.¹

Thus, Sambucus here confesses an inclination to be dissatisfied with his professional status and his condition in public life. At least, he *presents* himself this way. In doing this, Sambucus implicitly underlines his identity as a humanist scholar. He may sometimes be disappointed with his situation, but this only underscores what he considered to be his professional identity: he is not a farmer nor a soldier, but a scholar.

At first sight, this emblem seems an honest report of Sambucus’ human flaws. This interpretation does not, however, offer the most reliable view of who Sambucus was. More important in the emblem is the strict division of professions and talents. Sambucus creates a clarity about his identity that he rarely achieved during his real life. He presents himself as a scholar, when in fact he was working in different capacities at the same time. In this case the emblem does not clarify the relation between Sambucus’ scholarly activities and his other public identities, for instance, as a practising physician, or a Hungarian patriot. In this way, the emblems not only overshadow Sambucus’ other occupations and achievements, which is only enhanced by the modern inclination to see Sambucus as an emblematiser, but they also manipulate his image.

In this chapter I shall therefore attempt to introduce the historical figure of Sambucus from several angles simultaneously. Rather than taking the emblems as the point of departure, I shall discuss his various identities by looking at the full span of his life and his humanist occupations. This will not only modify the importance of the emblems in Sambucus’ life, but also shed light on the specific contexts in which the emblems are to be located. Of course, in this

¹ “Tu, quodcumque venit divino munere, lauda, / Croesus an Irus eris non te coquat [. .].”

investigation the emblems themselves will not be excluded as a source of biographical information.

Social Background

Joannes Sambucus was born on 25 July 1531 in Trnava (in Hungarian: Nagyszombat, in German: Tyrnau), nowadays part of Slovakia, then part of Upper Hungary.² He was born into a fairly prosperous family. His father, Petrus Sambucus, was a wealthy and locally influential man. He owned several houses and was twice mayor of Trnava, in 1547 and 1551.

After Petrus' death in 1565, Joannes wrote an affectionate portrait of him in a letter to Plantin, which is printed as a preface to the Plautus edition of 1566.³ The document is an interesting testimony of Sambucus' social background. In the letter he expressed his gratitude for the chances he had been given to study. It becomes clear Sambucus was the first of the family to receive this kind of humanist education. His father knew little Latin and was not given a thorough schooling.⁴ Already in a poem to his father, included in his *Poemata* (1555), Sambucus alluded to this when he wrote that his father's fame would have been even bigger if he had been properly educated.⁵

² A comprehensive list of primary and secondary material concerning Sambucus until 1991 is compiled by András Varga in István Monok, András Varga, Péter Ötvös (eds.), *Die Bibliothek Sambucus. Katalog nach der Abschrift von Pál Gulyás* (Szeged, 1992) 273–281. The most extensive biographical survey remains Hans Gerstinger, “Johannes Sambucus als Handschriftensammler,” in *Festschrift der Nationalbibliothek in Wien, herausgegeben zur Feier des 200 jährigen Bestehens des Gebäudes* (Vienna, 1926), pp. 251–400, esp. 260–290; see also idem, *Die Briefe des Johannes Sambucus*, pp. 11–20. Anton Vantuch wrote a monograph on Sambucus' life and works in Slovak, *Ján Sambucus. Život a dielo renesančného učenca* (Bratislava, 1975), with summaries in German and Russian. Furthermore there is a monographic study in Hungarian by János Orbán, *Sámbooky Jánosról* (Szeged, 1916) which I did not consult.

³ “Joannes Sambucus C. Plantino suo” (Vienna, 23 August 1565) in Sambucus (ed.), *M. Accii Plauti, Comoediae viginti, olim a Ioachimo Camerario emendatae: Nunc vero plus quam cc. versibus, qui passim desiderabantur, ex vv.cc. additis, suo quodammodo nitore restituae; opera et diligentia Ioannis Sambuci Tirmaviensis Pannonii. Aliquot eruditae C. Langii, Adr. Turnebi, Hadr. Iunii, & aliorum doctorum virorum, partim margini adscriptae, partim in calcem reiectae, observationes* (Antwerp: C. Plantin, 1566), fols. A2ro.–A4ro.

⁴ *Ibidem*, fol. A2vo.

⁵ “Ad Petrum Sambuky parentem,” in *Poemata quaedam [...]* (Padua: G. Perchacinus, 1555), fols. 28ro.–28vo.

In the portrait of his father Sambucus also provides some information about the family. Apart from his son Joannes, Petrus Sambucus had four daughters. The father had been able to arrange “a respectable and noble husband” for each of them, as Sambucus reports, which gives an indication of the social position of the family. Two of Joannes’ brothers in law, Joannes Panithy (married to his sister Catharina) and Stephan Gavay (married to Magdalena), are mentioned in the *Poemata*.⁶ Another, Stefan Nyilas, appears frequently in his correspondence.⁷ Sambucus junior would later arrange a respectable match for himself. In 1567 he married Christina Egerer, daughter of the wealthy Viennese merchant Coloman Egerer. The couple would have two daughters and one son.⁸ Clearly, Sambucus was proud of his father’s social career, which had not only enabled him to pursue his studies, but which had also brought a respectable life to his sisters. Tragically, all daughters died when their father was still alive.⁹ About Joannes’ mother nothing is known. Probably she was Petrus’ first wife, who had died when Joannes was still young; his father remarried later in his life.¹⁰

Petrus Sambucus was not only relatively rich, he was also a man of some political stature in the region. On several occasions he had acted as a mediator in internal conflicts in Hungary. As a reward for his services King Ferdinand I had made him a nobleman in 1549.¹¹

The significance of this noble status should not be overrated. Officially, there was no difference among the Hungarian nobility. In practice, however, the political influence of the new nobility was limited. The real power was in the hands of the old aristocracy, a small

⁶ *Ibidem*, fols. 28vo.–29vo. To Joannes Panithy Sambucus also dedicated the emblem ‘Necessitas dociles facit’ (Necessity makes one ready to learn [86]).

⁷ Gerstinger, *Die Briefe* 326. For the emblem dedicated to Egerer, see pp. 128–130.

⁸ Gerstinger, “Johannes Sambucus als Handschriftensammler,” 277 and *idem*, *Die Briefe*, p. 18.

⁹ Sambucus’ preface in the Plautus-edition, fol. A2vo.

¹⁰ Vantuch, *Ján Sambucus*, p. 243 (German summary).

¹¹ Mária Vida, “János Zsámboky (Sambucus) 1531–1584 and the ‘Icones,’” in *Kisén tanulmány a Zsámboky János (Joannes Sambucus) Veterum aliquot ac recentium Medicorum Philosophorumque Icones [...] (Budapest, 1985)*, p. 11. Vantuch, *Ján Sambucus*, pp. 22–46 (German summary, p. 243); *idem* (ed.), *Die Sambucusbriefe im Kreisarchiv von Trnava* in Gerstinger (ed.), *Die Briefe*, pp. 325–326. See the full text of the 1549 letter of nobility published by Anton Vantuch, “Nové dokumenty k životu a dielu Jána Sambuca,” *Historické Štúdie* 13 (1968), 250–251. It does not specify the title of a particular noble rank.

group of powerful landowners. Usually the lesser nobility was in some way serving one of these magnates. Furthermore, the elevation to nobility of Petrus Sambucus was also part of King Ferdinand's strategy to gain support. In any case, Sambucus was hardly the "déclassé nobleman turned burgher" as Marianna Birnbaum has labeled him.¹² Sambucus had not fallen in social status, but rather never really achieved the influence, nor the reputation of the old nobility.

This ambiguous social position is reflected in the emblems. Sambucus is self-assured about his family and background, but he is also looking for a patron to support him. In the very emblem about his coat of arms, entitled 'In labore fructus' (Labour brings fruit [173]), Sambucus exhibits this ambivalence about his social position (fig. 5). The coat of arms of the Sambucus family contained two cranes holding a stone in their feet and a golden ring in their beaks.¹³

Sambucus does not interpret the cranes in the conventional way, namely as tokens of vigilance.¹⁴ Instead, he reads the picture as a reference to the story of Palamedes, who, prompted by flying cranes, invented the use of letters. For him, the coat of arms forms a reference to learning and study. In this way, he connects the coat of arms to the concept of (intellectual) labour. This would hardly have been an appropriate device for his uneducated father. Neither would the concept of labour be a suitable virtue for the higher nobility. It seems that Sambucus, for want of an impressive lineage, transforms the specific heraldic image into an emblem of the virtues of the intellectual aristocracy.

Equally interesting in this respect is another emblem about the nobility, 'Cura publica' (Public concern [189]). It is dedicated to the Italian humanist Pietro Vettori, who was not only an excellent humanist scholar, but also a member of a renowned, aristocratic family.¹⁵ In the emblem the aristocratic pastime of falconry serves as an example of public service (fig. 6). In the epigram, the falcon itself observes:

¹² Marianna D. Birnbaum, "Humanism in Hungary," in *Renaissance Humanism. Foundations, Forms, and Legacy*, ed. Albert Rabil Jr., vol. 2 (Philadelphia, 1988), p. 304.

¹³ Vantuch, "Nové dokumenty," pp. 250–251.

¹⁴ For the tradition of the crane as a symbol of vigilance, see H.M. von Erffa, "Grus vigilans. Bemerkungen zur Emblematik," *Philobiblon* 1,4 (1957), 286–308.

¹⁵ Wilhelm Rüdiger, *Petrus Victorius aus Florenz* (Halle, 1896), pp. 1–15, and the introduction to Giuseppe Pompella (ed.), *Petri Victorii Epistolarum libri X* (Naples, 1991), pp. 9–12. For Sambucus' relation to Vettori, see Várady, "Relazioni di Giovanni Zsámboky," pp. 21–22, pp. 33–46.

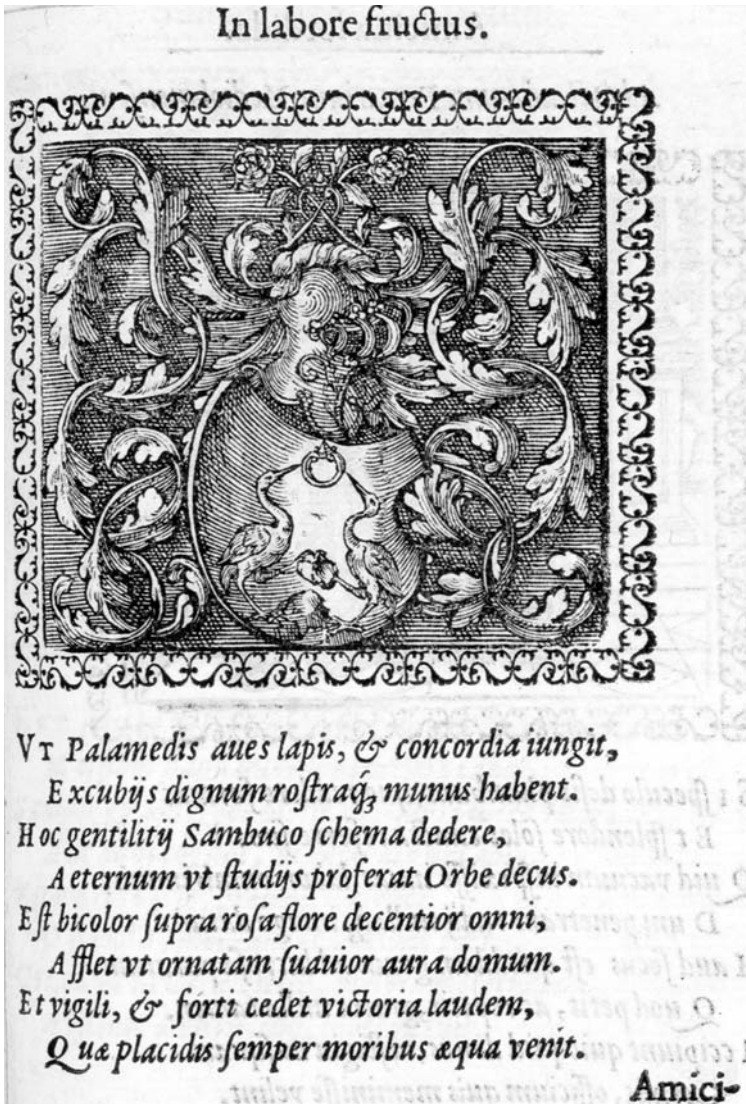


Fig. 5. 'In labore fructus' (Labour brings fruit [173]) reveals an ambivalent attitude towards Sambucus' social position.

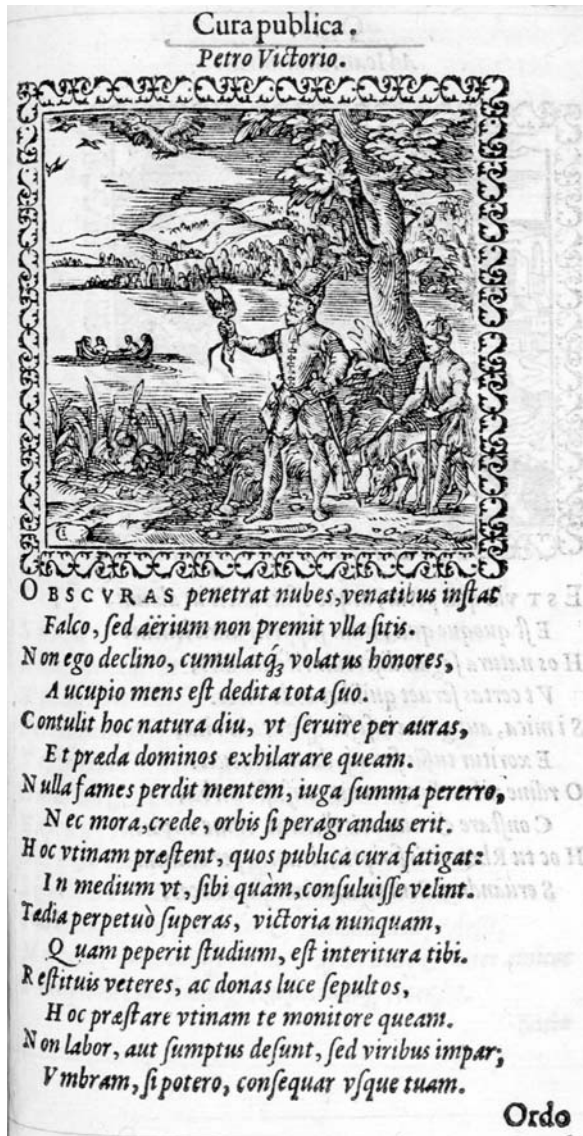


Fig. 6. In ‘Cura publica’ (Public concern [189]), dedicated to the Florentine humanist and nobleman Pietro Vettori, Sambucus is keenly aware of the unequal relation between the two humanists.

Contulit hoc natura diu, ut servire per auras,
 et praeda dominos exhilarare queam.

[. . .]

Hoc utinam praestent, quos publica cura fatigat:

In medium, ut sibi quam, consuluisse velint.

(Since long, Nature has attributed this [the ability to hunt birds], so that I can serve my masters in the air and gladden them with the prey. [. . .] May those whom the public administration leaves no rest, show that they care for the common good rather than for themselves.)

In theme and contents the epigram suggests a shared noble mindset. However, Sambucus does not put himself completely on the same line with his illustrious addressee. He suggests that the difference between him and Vettori is not a matter of background, but one of talent: "Dedication nor money is lacking, but my strength is inferior; I shall follow your shadow, whenever I can."¹⁶ Socially, he suggests, he and Vettori may both have a noble status, but as a scholar Sambucus feels the Italian humanist to be of a higher standing.

Peregrinatio Academica (1542–1552)

Sambucus received a thorough humanist education, which led him to several universities in Germany and France. A short survey may indicate the variety of the intellectual centres he visited.

Unusually early in his life, in April 1542, Joannes matriculated at Vienna University.¹⁷ He was only ten years old. Here, he learned Greek from one Georg Riethammer. In the period between 1543 and 1545 he moved to Leipzig. Here he studied with the famous humanist and Greek scholar Joachim Camerarius the Elder, father of the emblem author of the same name.

In 1545 Sambucus had left Leipzig for Wittenberg where he was admitted to the university on 29 June.¹⁸ Hardly one year later, he was forced to leave the city because of the conflicts between the

¹⁶ "Non labor aut sumptus desunt, sed viribus impar; / Umbram, si potero, consequar usque tuam."

¹⁷ Franz Gall, Willy Szaivert (eds.), *Die Matrikel der Universität Wien*, vol. 3 (1518/II–1579/I) (Vienna, 1971), p. 68.

¹⁸ C.E. Foerstemann (ed.), *Album academiae vitebergensis ab a. ch. MDII usque ad a. MDLX* (Leipzig, 1841), p. 225.

emperor Charles V and the German Protestant parties, united in the Schmalkaldic League (the Schmalkaldic war, 1546–1547). Pointing to the friendship between his former teacher Camerarius and the Protestant reformer Philip Melanchthon, it has often been inferred that Sambucus attended Melanchthon's lectures. There is, however, no concrete indication that Sambucus met Melanchthon in Wittenberg.¹⁹

On 17 July 1548 Sambucus enrolled in the Catholic academy of Ingolstadt, that would shortly become a stronghold of the Counter-Reformation.²⁰ His main teachers were Vitus Amerbach,²¹ professor of rhetoric, and Petrus Apianus, professor of mathematics. In Ingolstadt he also befriended the talented poet Petrus Lotichius secundus, and Apianus' sons Theodorus and Philippus. Sambucus' first publication dates from this period, a selection of speeches from Xenophon for pedagogical use.²²

In 1550 Sambucus is to be found in Strasbourg as a student of Johann Sturm.²³ At this time the institute was still a *gymnasium*, educating its pupils for the baccalaureate degree. Little is known

¹⁹ See for example: August Buck, "Leben und Werk des Joannes Sambucus (Zsámboky János)," introduction to the facsimile edition of Sambucus' *Emblemata* (Budapest, 1982) 8; Eleonore Novotny, *Johannes Sambucus (1531–1584). Leben und Werk* [unpublished doctoral dissertation] (Vienna, 1975), pp. 17–18, pp. 117–118; Gerstinger, "Johannes Sambucus als Handschriftensammler," p. 267; Gerstinger, *Die Briefe*, p. 11. Vantuch has shown that Melanchthon gave very few lectures in this particular period, (*Ján Sambucus*, p. 244).

²⁰ Götz von Pölnitz (ed.), *Die Matrikel der Ludwig-Maximiliansuniversität Ingolstadt-Landshut-München* (Munich, 1937), p. 643.

²¹ In a cheerful poem in his 1555 collection he addresses Amerbach to thank him for his lessons, and to inform him about Sambucus' new life in Padua; *Poemata*, fols. 30vo–31ro.

²² Δημηγορίαι. *Hoc est conciones aliquot ex libris Xenophontis de Paedia Cyri, breviores et selectiores versae pro tyronibus Graecae linguae [. . .]* (Basel: J. Oporinus, 1552). The dedicatory letter to Apianus' sons is dated 20 February 1549. Another work mentioned in his auto-bibliography as *Tabellae dialect. in usum Heftmari. Vienn. 1547* probably concerns a manuscript, see Gedeon Borsa, James E. Walsh, "Eine gedruckte Selbstbiographie von Johannes Sambucus" *Magyar Könyvszemle* (1965), p. 130; Gerstinger, *Die Briefe*, p. 12. Vantuch infers from this that Sambucus was probably in Vienna in 1547.

²³ Johann Sturm (1507–1589) was the rector of the Strasburg gymnasium (established in 1538; in 1567 the school achieved the status of academy). He taught rhetoric and dialectics, later also classics and philosophy. As a moderate Lutheran, he later tried to reconcile the French Huguenots and the German Protestants. This brought him into conflict with the Lutheran authorities of Strasbourg, leading to his expulsion as rector in 1581. See the lemma by Hans-Josef Krey in *Biographisch-Bibliographisch Kirchenlexikon*, vol. 11 (Hamm, 1996), s.v. [columns 145–149].

about Sambucus' short stay in Strasbourg, but there are a few later traces of his contact with Sturm. In 1555 Sambucus addressed a poem to him; later he dedicated his emblem 'Ordo' (Order [190]) to Sturm.²⁴ Furthermore there is a letter of recommendation to him by Sambucus dating from 1567. Sambucus here alludes to the strict discipline of Sturm's *gymnasium*.²⁵

His next destination was Paris, where he can be located in the autumn of 1550.²⁶ One year later he held an oration at the Sorbonne university. He graduated and received the degree of *Magister* in philosophy in 1552.²⁷ At this time, the old university in Paris was still a stronghold of a conservative scholarly climate. A more modern, humanist approach towards research and education was to be found at the Collège Royal.²⁸ Here Sambucus probably met Adrien Turnèbe (Turnebus), who had just been appointed professor of Greek, as well as Pierre de la Ramée (Ramus), then still professor of philosophy, and the mathematician Pascal Duhamel. Little is known about the precise nature of Sambucus' relation to these 'royal' professors, but to all three he would later dedicate an emblem.²⁹ There is no correspondence extant between Sambucus and any one of them. Even the date of Sambucus' first introduction to these leading figures of the Collège is unclear. Nor is there a reference to them in the 1555 *Poemata*. This may be an indication that on this first visit to Paris Sambucus was still very much a student finding his way in the learned

²⁴ *Poemata*, fols. 32ro–32vo. About the emblem dedicated to Sturm: this is only from the second edition onwards. Apart from the added dedication beneath the motto, the epigram is amplified with a distich addressing Sturm personally (see chapter four for the relationship between emblem and dedication, esp. pp. 130–131).

²⁵ Sambucus to Sturm, d.d. 1 April 1567; Gerstinger, *Die Briefe*, pp. 80–81, no. xxi.

²⁶ For Sambucus' activities in France see E. Bach, *Un humaniste hongrois en France, Jean Sambucus et ses relations littéraires (1551–1584)* (Etudes Françaises 5) (Szeged 1932). The early date of Sambucus' presence in Paris was hitherto unnoticed in the biographical reports. The date is based on Petrus Lotichius' poem inviting Sambucus to celebrate Virgil's birthday on 15 October 1550. See Stephen Zon, *Petrus Lotichius Secundus Neo-Latin Poet* (Bern-Frankfurt on the Main-New York, 1983), pp. 298–299.

²⁷ Gerstinger, "Johannes Sambucus als Handschriftensammler," p. 267.

²⁸ Bach, *Un humaniste hongrois*, pp. 15–17.

²⁹ 'Insignia Mercurii quid?' (What are the signs of Mercury? [111]) is dedicated to Turnebus, 'Plus quam Diomedis et Glauci permutatio' (More than the exchange between Diomedes and Glaucus [24]) to Duhamel and 'Ὅυκ ἔστι μιάσματος γῆρας' (There is no growing old of this defilement [185]) to Ramus.

world. He would visit Paris again some years later. The contacts with the royal professors would become closer then.

Early Career: In Search of Patronage (1553–1564)

In receiving his master's degree, Sambucus completed the first phase of his educational career. The next step was finding a suitable appointment to earn his living. This phase of his life is characterised by constant travelling and a busy agenda of teaching, learning, collecting books and coins, and looking for patronage. Being published at the end of this period, the *Emblemata* are marked by the concerns, activities and contacts of this period.

In his quest for patronage Sambucus at first made two attempts, one to become historian at the Habsburg court, and another to find a place in the surroundings of the bishop of Regensburg, Georg von Pappenheim.³⁰ Both plans failed. It was Nicolaus Oláh, the new Hungarian archbishop, who eventually became his patron.³¹ He made Sambucus preceptor of his nephew George Bona and the young humanist Nicolaus Istvánffy who were to study in Padua. In October 1553 Sambucus left for his first visit to the Italian peninsula.³²

During his stay in Padua Sambucus studied medicine.³³ However, it seems that he did not start his medical training with much enthusiasm. In a poem addressed to his former Ingolstadt professor Vitus Amerbach (1555) he wrote:

Phoebo me ac medicis dedi colendum,
 Donec quid magis accidit venustum
 Et meo placet simul palato.
 Consultum hoc studio tamen propinquis
 Et meae cuperem bonae saluti.³⁴

³⁰ Gerstinger, "Johannes Sambucus als Handschriftensammler," pp. 267–268.

³¹ About Nicolaus Oláh (1493–1567), himself also an active humanist, see Marianna D. Birnbaum, *Humanists in a Shattered World. Croatian and Hungarian Latinity in the Sixteenth Century* (UCLA Slavic Studies 15) (Columbus, 1986), pp. 125–167.

³² For Sambucus' contacts in Italian cities, see Várady, "Relazioni di Giovanni Zsámboky," pp. 3–54.

³³ See Stephan Bálint-Nagy, "Der weltberühmte Historicus Johannes Sambucus (1531–1584) als Arzt," *Südhoffs Archiv für Geschichte der Medizin*, 24 (1931), pp. 154–156.

³⁴ Sambucus, *Poemata*, fols. 30vo–31ro.

(I have devoted myself to the service of Phoebus Apollo and medicine, until something more elegant comes along, which also pleases my taste. By this study, however, I wish to help my dear ones and my own good health.)

Medicine, it appears, was not refined enough for his taste. This may also explain why he did not care to finish his medical studies with a doctoral degree. After attaining the grade of licentiate in 1555, Sambucus abandoned his formal training. The study was probably chosen for practical reasons. Until he had found a more secure position Sambucus had to support himself in various ways. Medical practice could earn him money when financial support for his literary and scholarly activities was lacking.

Apart from this, he still devoted much time to studying the humanities, presumably classical literature with the professors Francesco Robortello and Giovanni Fasolo, law and archeology with Guido Panciroli. Sambucus would later dedicate emblems to Robortello and Panciroli.³⁵ Furthermore, Sambucus was an active member of a small community of Hungarian students in Padua. This is reflected not only in his emblems, but also in the aforementioned *Poemata*, published in Padua in 1555. In the latter collection poems are addressed to, among others, Andreas Dudith, Juraj Draskovics, Nicolaus Istvánffy, Ferenc Forgách, Franciscus Pesthy, and Sigismund Torda.³⁶

Probably in the summer of 1555 Sambucus fled from Padua due to the bubonic plague. Together with Lotichius he went to Bologna. In this city Achille Bocchi and his academy had just published an important collection of what would later be called emblems, *Symbolicarum quaestionum libri quinque*.³⁷ Bocchi must have impressed Sambucus, judging from Sambucus' intimate address of the emblem 'Dum potes vive' (Live while you can [67]): "Ad Achillem Bocchium, tanquam parentem." Unfortunately, nothing more is known about Sambucus'

³⁵ 'Mutua et coniuncta' (Reciprocal and connected [91]) is dedicated to Robortello, 'Aequitas Senatus' (Fairness of the senate [255]) to Panciroli.

³⁶ For more members of the Hungarian student community in Padua at the time, see Várady, "Relazioni di Giovanni Zsámboky," p. 49, n. 34. For Hungarian students at Italian universities in general, see also E. Veress, *Matricula et acta Hungarorum in universitatibus Italiae studentium* (Kolozsvár, 1915–1917).

³⁷ Zon, *Petrus Lotichius*, p. 301.

relation to the Academia Bocchiana and its founder.³⁸ It remains intriguing, though, to know that Sambucus met the Italian humanist in this year. One can hardly imagine that the symbols did not heavily influence Sambucus' frame of reference. The poems of both emblem books will be compared in more detail in chapter five.

In 1557, after four years of working as a preceptor for Bona, Sambucus returns to Vienna to try his luck at court. At the end of this year, he was involved in the transfer of a collection of ancient manuscripts from the university library (Kollegienbibliothek) to the imperial collections. Probably in reward for this, emperor Ferdinand I granted him the title of *familiaris aulae* in December 1557 and gave him an extra allowance at the beginning of 1558.³⁹ It formed the first step in the direction of a career at court.

In addition to this attachment at court, Sambucus again worked as a preceptor from 1559 until 1564. At least part of this period he guided Jakob Fugger (1542–1598), a member of the famous banking family and son of Anton Fugger I.⁴⁰ Earlier, in 1558, Sambucus had helped the young Fugger during his studies at Padua, as can be seen in a manuscript on dialectics made by Sambucus for Fugger in this year.⁴¹ Furthermore, Sambucus dedicated to Fugger his dialogue on the use of the ciceronian style, also conceived in Padua during this period.⁴² Another reference to their contact is to be found in a letter dating from 1560.⁴³ The exact nature of Sambucus' services

³⁸ See Elizabeth See Watson, *Achille Bocchi and the Emblem Book as Symbolic Form* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 61.

³⁹ Bálint-Nagy, "Der weltberühmte Johannes Sambucus," pp. 165–166; Gerstinger "Johannes Sambucus als Handschriftensammler," pp. 272–273.

⁴⁰ Norbert Lieb, *Die Fugger und die Kunst im Zeitalter der hohen Renaissance* (Munich, 1958), p. 310 and p. 472; Georg Lill, *Hans Fugger (1531–1598) und die Kunst. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Spätrenaissance in Süddeutschland* (Leipzig, 1908), p. 28. With reference to the *Fugger Archiv* 1,2,1 ("Inventarium der Diener Antons fol. 8") both Lieb and Lill indicate that Sambucus was Jakob's preceptor from 1559–1564.

⁴¹ *Quaestiones dialecticae Joan(nis) Sambuci pata(vii) 1558 a^o pro Jacobo Fuggero factae*. See *Die Bibliothek Sambucus* nos. 2570 and 1798; the item is also listed on Sambucus' auto-bibliography; see the facsimile reproduction in an appendix to Borsa-Walsh, "Selbstbibliographie."

⁴² *De imitatione ciceroniana dialogi III* [. . .] (Paris: A. Gorbin, 1561); later published in Antwerp by L. Malcotius in 1563. The dedicatory letter to Jakob Fugger is dated 1 November, 1558.

⁴³ See Sambucus' letter to Theodor Zwinger in Basel, Padua d.d. 1 March 1560. At the end S. sends Zwinger Jakob Fugger's regards. Gerstinger, *Die Briefe*, pp. 48–51, no. ii.

is not clear. In any case, he earned some money from the job, as is clear from Anton Fugger's will (1560). At the same time he also enjoyed certain practical privileges, like the use of the Fugger postal system.⁴⁴

During these years, Sambucus travelled intensively. Apart from exploring the riches of these places and meeting scholars, he was constantly searching for new and interesting items for his collections of books and antiquities. In 1558, Sambucus had left Vienna for Italy, visiting Venice and Padua. Probably he also made a short trip to Paris and back to Padua in 1559, before crossing the Alps once more to the French capital in 1560. His second stay in Paris lasted two years. Sambucus established lively contacts in the milieu of the Collège Royal. Apart from the professors mentioned earlier he now also met Denys Lambin and Jean Dorat, as well as the numismatists and bibliophiles Henri de Mesmes and Jean Grolier. It is in this period that the composition of the emblems is to be situated. Probably Sambucus' first meeting with Christopher Plantin dates from this period as well.⁴⁵ In the first half of 1562 he left Paris for the last time, forced by the outbreak of the religious wars.⁴⁶ In search of books and manuscripts he again journeyed south, to the Italian cities of Genoa, Viterbo, Rome, Naples and Brindisi. He stayed in Italy until the spring of 1563.

In the autumn of 1563 Sambucus is found in the Low Countries, in the city of Gent.⁴⁷ During his stay he prepared the publication

⁴⁴ Georg Simnacher and Maria Gräfin von Preysing, *Die Fuggertestamente des 16. Jahrhunderts* II (Edition of the testaments) (Weissenhorn, 1992), p. 163: "dem Johani Sambucho, meines sons Jacob praeceptor, zwaychundert gulden rainisch." This sum of money is not exceptional; in the same document Fugger's brother in law and attorney Sebastian Christoph Reching receives 1,200 Rhinish guilders; to Johann Tonner Fugger bequeathed 300 guilders; others who receive an amount of 200 guilders are Fugger's waiter, his cook, and his equerry (163–164). For the use of the Fugger post, see Vantuch, *Ján Sambucus* 36, and Sambucus' letter to Ortelius, d.d. 22 September 1563; Gerstinger, *Die Briefe*, pp. 62–65, no. x.

⁴⁵ See Waterschoot, "Lucas d'Heere und Johannes Sambucus," pp. 45–52.

⁴⁶ Bach, *Un humaniste hongrois*, p. 12.

⁴⁷ See Sambucus letter to Ortelius, d.d. Gent, 22 September 1563; Gerstinger, *Die Briefe*, pp. 62–65, no. x. In a letter to Justus Lipsius, d.d. 20 September 1591, Carolus Clusius refers to a visit to Liège as early as the beginning of 1563. Clusius furthermore adds that Sambucus and he were on their way to Augsburg. See Petrus Burmannus, *Sylloges Epistolarum*, vol. 1 (Leiden: S. Luchtman, [1624]), pp. 318–319. In view of Sambucus' correspondence from Naples in January it seems impossible that he was travelling from the Low Countries to Augsburg in this time.

of his collection of emblems, possibly in some form of cooperation with Lucas d'Heere, who lived in Gent.⁴⁸ The emblems were, however, not the only thing on Sambucus' mind. In the same months he also worked on the new edition of his work on the ciceronian style (Antwerp: L. Malcotius, 1563) and contributed to the publication of the numismatic work *C. Julius Caesar sive historiae Imperatorum Caesarumque Romanor[um] ex antiquis numismatibus restitutae* [. . .] by Hubertus Goltzius and Marcus Laurinus (Bruges, 1563). Furthermore, he was engaged in other social and private activities, as appears in one of his emblems, an *epithalamium* devoted to a local couple, and a manuscript love poem for a local girl.⁴⁹

Sambucus did not stay in the Low Countries for long. Before the publication of the *Emblemata* was completed, in August 1564, Sambucus had already reached Vienna. In February he had left Antwerp and returned via Cologne and Augsburg. By 1564, Sambucus had been travelling through Europe for twenty-two years. This itinerant life left a clear mark on the *Emblemata*, both in the international range of names appearing in the dedications, and in some particular emblems about travelling. A good example of this is the emblem 'Fidei canum exemplum' (An example of the loyalty of dogs [143]) devoted to his dogs, Bombo and Madel (fig. 7).

In his tribute, Sambucus lists the places where his dogs accompanied him: Paris, Rome, Naples, the extreme regions of Germany, and the Southern Netherlands. The picture presents Sambucus on his horse, wearing a traveller's outfit (including a sword, a sign of a noble status) and his two dogs. It is a representative image of Sambucus' life until 1564, but the emblem also hints at the near future, when he expresses his intention to bring his dogs to his "sweet, calling fatherland soon" ("Ducentur et spero brevi/dulcem in vocantem et patriam"). However, it would be misleading to regard this image as characteristic of his life-style in general.⁵⁰ Sambucus was

⁴⁸ See Waterschoot, "Lucas d'Heere und Johannes Sambucus," pp. 45–52, and below pp. 226–228.

⁴⁹ 'In sponsalia Ioannis Ambii Angli et Albae Rolleae D. Arnoldi Medici Gandavensis filiae.' About the love poem for a certain Magdalena of Gent, see Hans Gerstinger, "Ein gelehrter Briefwechsel zwischen Wien und den Niederlanden aus dem Zeitalter des Humanismus" *Deutsches Vaterland* (June–July, 1922), 10.

⁵⁰ See George Hugo Tucker, "Homo Viator and the Liberty of Exile," in *EMF Studies in Early Modern France*. Vol. 2: *Signs of the Early Modern I: 15th and 16th Centuries*, ed. David Lee Rubin (Charlottesville, 1996), pp. 33–34.

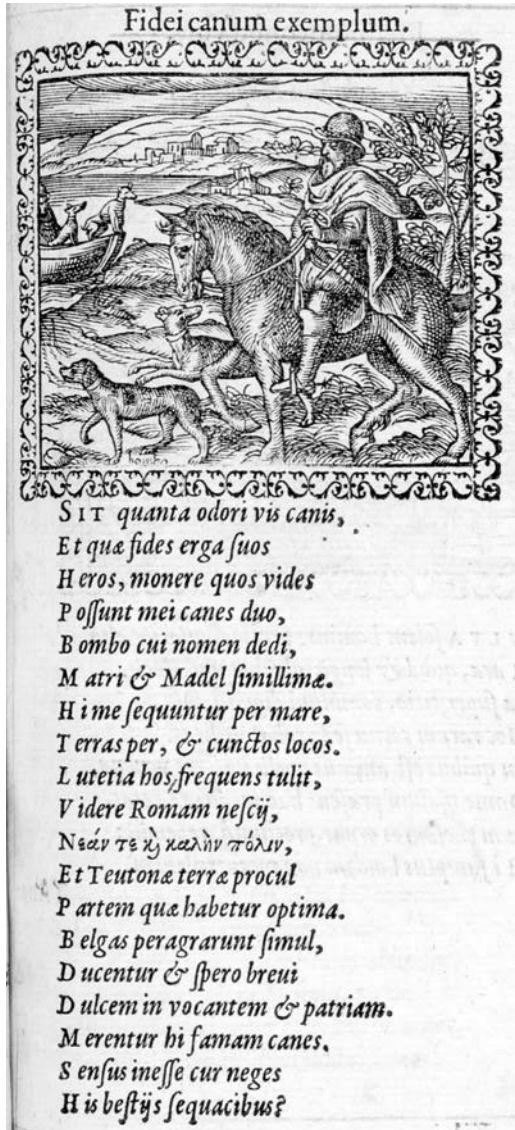


Fig. 7. Representing Sambucus as the scholar on his *peregrinatio academica* 'Fidei canum exemplum' (An example of the loyalty of dogs [143]) also portrays him as a member of an intellectual elite.

not a wandering scholar all of his life. The travel of this period was part and parcel of this phase in the humanist's career.

In 1564, when Sambucus had prospects for a more secure position, he settled permanently in Vienna. He now entered a new stage of his life. Apart from some temporary excursions, for instance to his native Trnava or to his country house in Mannersdorf, situated in the Leitha mountains near the border with Hungary, he would remain in Vienna till his death in 1584. His main occupation was his work in service of the Habsburg emperor.

The Courtier

In spite of the conventional warnings in the *Emblemata* against the risks of such a career, Sambucus thus eventually put his cards on a position at court in 1564.⁵¹ During his life he would serve two emperors, Maximilian II and Rudolf II. Today, many studies of the cultural climate at the Habsburg court interpret Sambucus' presence as a sign of a flourishing intellectual community, in which Sambucus was one of the leading men. In the words of R.J.W. Evans, for instance: "Sambucus was an ornament of Maximilian's and Rudolf's court."⁵² However true this may seem, it is questionable to what extent Sambucus was equally considered as such at the Habsburg court in the period from 1564 to 1584. The role of the emblems in establishing his reputation at court is even more obscure. A closer look at his career in Vienna will modify the view of Sambucus as a successful courtier.

Returning to Vienna from his visit to the Low Countries Sambucus made a promising start. Of course he was not a complete novice. His first service for the court, concerning the cataloguing of imperial book collections, had been in 1557. In the same year he had been made *familiaris aulae*. Probably in 1565 he was employed as imperial historiographer, succeeding Wolfgang Lazius, who had died

⁵¹ See 'Spes aulica' (Expectations at court [231], fig. 13) dedicated to Christopher Plantin, which will be more extensively discussed in the next chapter (pp. 79–81) and 'Cedendum, non adulandum' (By withdrawing, not by flattering [165]), dedicated to Nicolaus Istváffy.

⁵² R.J.W. Evans, *The Making of the Habsburg Monarchy 1550–1700. An Interpretation* (Oxford, 1979), p. 36.

in the same year.⁵³ Furthermore, in 1567 he was appointed court physician and he was given the title of *comes palatinus*.⁵⁴ Around 1569 he was also made *consiliarius aulae*.⁵⁵ What did these offices and titles imply? What sort of work did Sambucus have to do in return?

In the first place, collecting and editing ancient texts was an important part of his occupation as a courtier. In his correspondence with Maximilian II Sambucus suggests that his journey through Italy and France in the period 1558–1563 was for this purpose exclusively. In a letter of January 1563, Sambucus apologises for his four years of absence by stressing the relevance of his quest for ancient sources (“in conquirendis antiquitatibus et libris peregrinatio”):

Meminit enim Tua Maiestas, quanto animi ardore, qua cupiditate studeam patriae totique orbi terrarum, imprimis vero Christi rebus prodesse; quod ego coram T(ua) M(aiestate) pluribus verbis et vero exemplis testatus sum, ac T(ua) M(aiestas) benignissime atque clementissime voluntatem meam comprobavit.

(Certainly, Your Majesty remembers my zeal and desire to be of value to the fatherland, the entire world but, most of all, to the cause of Christ. I have given evidence of this in your presence, on many occasions, not only by words, but also in concrete examples, and Your Majesty most kind-heartedly and gently approved of my intentions.)⁵⁶

The “concrete examples” refer to both his collecting activities and his publications. In the period between 1558–1564 Sambucus donated no less than four Greek and five Latin manuscripts, some of which were extremely valuable.⁵⁷ The first publication in this respect concerned a short history of Hungary by Petrus Ranzanus, which was dedicated to Maximilian.⁵⁸ Sambucus sent his letter at a time when Maximilian’s powers were increasing. In September of 1562 he had

⁵³ Gerstinger, “Johannes Sambucus als Handschriftensammler,” p. 277.

⁵⁴ Bálint-Nagy, “Der weltberühmte Johannes Sambucus,” p. 165; Gerstinger, *Briefe*, p. 17; a transcription of Sambucus’ request for this honour is given by Vantuch, *Ján Sambucus*, p. 227.

⁵⁵ Gerstinger, “Johannes Sambucus als Handschriftensammler,” p. 277.

⁵⁶ Letter by Sambucus to Maximilian (Archduke of Austria, King of Bohemia and Rome), Naples, d.d. 18 January 1563, Gerstinger, *Die Briefe*, p. 61, no. ix.

⁵⁷ See Josef Stummvoll (ed.), *Geschichte der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek. Erster Teil: Die Hofbibliothek (1368–1922)* (Vienna, 1968), p. 117.

⁵⁸ Joannes Sambucus (ed.), Petrus Ranzanus, *Epitome rerum ungaricarum [. . .] adiecta est Rerum ad Agriam gestarum anno 1552 brevis eiusdem Sambuci narratio* (Vienna: R. Hofhalter, 1558). See Gerstinger, *Briefe*, p. 16.

been crowned king of Bohemia, and he would be crowned as king of Hungary as well in August 1563.⁵⁹

Apart from his scholarly, philological work he could also be asked for practical secretarial or even political jobs. His skill in Latin could be used for translating official documents, as is indicated, for example, by Sambucus' letter to the treasury in 1565. This case concerns a request to translate the German version of the *Waldordnung* into Latin. Sambucus politely refuses: he claims to know too little German, let alone that of the rustic registers.⁶⁰ It is not clear how these jobs relate to the standing of a particular courtier. In this case, for instance, it is hard to find out whether Sambucus' begging to be excused has more to do with indignation at being asked to do such menial work than with a lack of ability.

Similarly, his involvement with the English delegation of 1567 was of a quite practical nature. The earl of Sussex had come to Vienna to prepare the never realised marriage between queen Elizabeth I and Maximilian's younger brother, archduke Karl. Sambucus' contribution consisted in arranging four horses for the archduke's retinue.⁶¹ All horses had to be of the same colour and, if possible, accompanied by a good servant. Sambucus' involvement in this case again suggests that he did not perform important diplomatic functions. His position was relatively modest.

The only concrete example of influence in a political matter dates from several years later. In his capacity of *consiliarius aulae* Sambucus helped the emperor in the thorny issue of the relations between imperial and papal power. On Maximilian's request he wrote a report about this in 1571.⁶² It was prompted by a dispute between Maximilian and pope Pius V about the influence over the Italian fiefdoms. Cosimo

⁵⁹ Paula Sutter Fichtner, *Emperor Maximilian II* (New Haven-London, 2001), p. 57.

⁶⁰ Letter d.d. Vienna, 26 April, 1565; Gerstinger, *Die Briefe*, pp. 69–71, no. xiv. Sambucus also mentions that he had already reported this message to the emperor personally.

⁶¹ See Sambucus' letter to the city council of Tyrnau, d.d. 2 December, 1567; Gerstinger, *Die Briefe*, pp. 339–340.

⁶² Manuscript by Sambucus, *Περὶ παναθεντείας sive maiestate imperatoris, et quorundam praedictio sive donatione Constantina*, ÖNB, Cod. Vind. Lat. 9534. See Imre Téglásy, "Über das Schicksal der Donatio Constantiniana im 16. Jahrhundert. Ein unbekanntes Werk des Johannes Sambucus (Zsámboky) über die kaiserliche Plenipotenz," in *Geschichtsbewußtsein und Geschichtsschreibung in der Renaissance*, ed. A. Buck, T. Klaniczay, and S.K. Németh (Leiden, etc.–Budapest, 1989), pp. 85–96.

de Medici of Florence wished to receive the title of grand duke. Maximilian had refused this several times, when the pope conferred it in 1569. Maximilian considered this a flagrant transgression against his authority. To justify his objections he ordered archival and historical investigations into the matter, of which Sambucus' tract is one example.⁶³ Even in this case, however, Sambucus did not play a role of any political significance. By the time he had completed his analysis the conflict had already been solved.⁶⁴ If, then, Sambucus could be seen as an ornament at Maximilian's court, this did not, in any case, involve political influence.

Sambucus' position as a court physician is equally modest. The position of titular court physician (*medicus aulae titularis*), to which he was appointed in January 1567, was the first step for a medical doctor in the court hierarchy. As such it was not paid with an annual allowance, in contrast to the post of *medicus actualis* and the prestigious place of personal physician of the emperor.⁶⁵ It only meant that Sambucus was obliged to help other courtiers and personnel when necessary.

Moreover, outside the courtly setting, his lack of a doctoral degree led to a conflict with the Faculty of Medicine of the university in 1567.⁶⁶ In Vienna only those who were members of the Faculty were allowed to practise as a physician. Membership was open to all alumni, and, after a special procedure (the *actus repetitionis*), also to doctors with degrees from foreign academies. Sambucus was summoned to submit his doctoral degree certificate in 1567. But he failed twice and kept on practising. The Faculty therefore decided to bring the case before the city senate (*Stadtsenat*), a procedure that usually ended with banishment.⁶⁷ Fortunately, for Sambucus it would not come to this sentence. The problem was solved when the emperor on April 1, 1568 decreed that the court physicians were no longer liable to the Faculty of Medicine, and that they were allowed to

⁶³ Téglásy, "Über das Schicksal," pp. 86–89; Fichtner, *Emperor Maximilian II*, pp. 173–174.

⁶⁴ Téglásy, "Über das Schicksal," p. 93.

⁶⁵ Bálint-Nagy, "Der weltberühmte Johannes Sambucus," p. 165.

⁶⁶ The most complete report of this affair is given by Bálint-Nagy, "Der weltberühmte Johannes Sambucus," pp. 167–170.

⁶⁷ *Ibidem*.

work as physicians without the Faculty's consent. It is not clear whether the imperial decision was prompted by this specific affair. For Sambucus it certainly came at the right time.

With all these different titles and formal positions Sambucus' salary can be a revealing index of the appreciation for his services and standing at court. Although it is difficult to get a clear picture of all the financial transactions made to courtiers, it is still possible to get some idea. With his title of *familiaris aulae* Sambucus received an annual stipend of first 100, later 200 *Florins* (c. 130 *Taler*). In April 1568 Sambucus' annual income as historiographer is fixed at 100 *Taler*. One year later, the amount is doubled, while in 1576, Sambucus earned 300 *Taler* as a historiographer.⁶⁸ Thus, if the two stipends are be put together, Sambucus officially had an annual income of approximately 430 *Taler* at the height of his career. This was realistic, when compared to fellow humanist courtiers, such as Blotius and Clusius. If compared to the salaries of the Italian antiquarian Jacopo Strada, officially employed as an architect, and the *Kapellmeister* Filippo di Monte, Sambucus was somewhat better off.⁶⁹ However, he was not the best paid humanists at court. The holder of this title was Joannes Crato von Krafftheim, one of Sambucus' patrons: he earned 920 guilders (which is about 765–790 *Taler*). Still, the annual wages are not necessarily all the income courtiers received. Some payments were made in natural goods. Cases in point are the silver chalice Sambucus received from the emperor as a wedding present in 1567 and even a house in Sankt Georg (nowadays Jur, between Bratislava and Trnava).⁷⁰

⁶⁸ For the salaries of 1568 and 1569, see *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses*, vol. 5 (Vienna, 1887), p. cvii, no. 4417 and p. cviii, no. 4425. For the salary of 1576, see Dirk Jacob Jansen, "The Instruments of Patronage. Jacopo Strada at the Court of Maximilian II: A Case-Study," in *Kaiser Maximilian II: Kultur und Politik im 16. Jahrhundert*, ed. Friedrich Edelmayr, Alfred Kohler (Vienna, 1992), p. 190.

⁶⁹ I am grateful to Gabor Almasi (Central European University, Budapest) for sharing information about the salaries of Sambucus and his colleagues, based on his forthcoming PhD thesis *The Uses of Humanism. Johannes Sambucus (1531–1584), Andreas Dudith (1533–1589) and the Republic of Letters*. For Strada and di Monte, Jansen, "The Instruments of Patronage," pp. 189–190.

⁷⁰ *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses*, vol. 5 (Vienna, 1887), p. cvi, no. 4410, d.d. 2 August, 1567: "Der Hofzahlmeister David Haag wird beauftragt, dem historico Johan Sambuco auf sein hochzeitliche freid ain trinkghesier im Werte von 100 Thalern durch den niederösteirrischen Regimentsrath Dr. Sigmund

Furthermore, after a promising start Sambucus' career at court stagnated. Until 1575, he had had easy access to the emperor Maximilian II. The letter to Maximilian (then still archduke and king) mentioned above, and remarks in some of his other letters confirm this point.⁷¹ The turning point came in 1575, when Sambucus was surpassed by Hugo Blotius in the race for the function of imperial librarian (*praefectus bibliothecae*). The appointment of this Dutch humanist, who was a new man at court, meant a serious disappointment for Sambucus, who had been working with the imperial collections of books and manuscripts for nearly twenty years since his first cataloguing job in 1557.⁷² The choice for Blotius was clearly connected to the influence of his patrons. Before settling in Vienna in 1574, Blotius had acted as a preceptor of the sons of two important courtiers: Joannes Listhy, the bishop of Raab/Győr and vice-chancellor of the Hungarian court chancellery, and Lazarus von Schwendi, once leader of a campaign against the Turks and at this time the emperor's advisor on military policy.⁷³ Blotius had done his job well and used the support of his former employees as a stepping stone to a more permanent position.

In a letter to Joannes Crato (6 April, 1575) Sambucus bitterly remarks that the library lost the great opportunity of attracting a real expert:

Si Caesarea Maiestas benigne rem mecum confecisset, quod saepe iussit et voluit ante triennium et alias, Bibliothecae Augustae curam in

von Oed verehren zu lassen und dasselbe aus den Gefällen des Hofzahlmeisteramtes zu bezahlen." For the house in Sankt Georg, see Vantuch's "Anhang" to Gerstinger, *Die Briefe*, p. 327.

⁷¹ Apart from letter xiv (see footnote 60), see for example letter lxxxv (Vienna, 4 March, 1575): here Sambucus quotes a short conversation he had with the Emperor, before the latter left for Prague: "Nunc, Sambuce, schreybt mir zu Zeytten. Eurer Supplication bin ich ingedenkh, lasst mich manen zu Prag, will euer nicht vergessen; seht wievill negocia mich gehalten haben." Of particular interest to Sambucus' relation to Maximilian in religious matters is Sambucus' correspondence to Jean Matal and Georgius Cassander, discussed below in the section about Sambucus' religious attitude.

⁷² About Blotius, see Leendert Brummel, *Twee ballingen 's lands tijdens onze opstand tegen Spanje. Hugo Blotius (1534-1608) Emanuel van Meteren (1535-1612)* (The Hague, 1972), pp. 1-80; Howard Louthan, *The Quest for Compromise. Peacemakers in Counter-Reformation Vienna* (Cambridge, 1997), esp. pp. 53-84; G. Knod, "Hugo Blotius in seinen Beziehungen zu Strassburg" *Centralblatt für Bibliothekswesen*, 12 (1895), 266-275.

⁷³ See Brummel, *Twee ballingen 's lands*, pp. 33-34; for Schwendi see Louthan, *The Quest for Compromise*, passim.

me praecipuam recepissem ac iis modis illam in ordinem et copiam redegissem, ut et numero et dignitate et serie aliis multis anteponi iure posset. [. . .] Sed nunc nec curo nec velim, dum mea proprie mihi colenda sit et tractanda, ne, si quid depromo cumque omnibus comunico, suspicetur quisquam me ex Imperatoris Apothecis sumpsisse etc. [. . .]⁷⁴

(If His Majesty had graciously settled the business with me, as he has frequently told and wished for the last three years and on other occasions, I would have taken on me the special responsibility for the Imperial Library. In these ways I should have restored order and built up an abundant collection, that would have justly surpassed many other collections in number, in quality, and in interconnection. [. . .] But now, I do not care and I would not want to either; from now on I can devote myself to my own books and handle them exclusively, without being suspected of stealing from the emperor's store-room etcetera, when I take something away to make it accessible to everybody [. . .])

In the final, icy side-remark Sambucus refers to the affair of a missing rare manuscript of Dioscorides Pedianus' *De materia medica*, a Greek encyclopedia about the medicinal uses of plants and animals. This splendid manuscript had been donated to the emperor some time before by Augerius Busbequius, one of Blotius' most important patrons.⁷⁵ Sambucus had borrowed it for his preparations of an edition of the text. In a public speech to the emperor about the management of the library, Blotius implicitly accused Sambucus of having guarded the manuscript for his own use.⁷⁶ By then, the campaign for the librarianship had been going on for at least some months.

For many reasons the emperor's decision to appoint Blotius must have been a severe setback for Sambucus. In the first place, he must have felt betrayed, especially by Crato and Blotius. Joannes Crato was Sambucus' most important broker for imperial patronage. While Sambucus was still writing letters to him pleading to defend his interests, Crato had been recommending Blotius as a librarian instead. Until then, the relation between Blotius and Sambucus was almost one of client to patron. Sambucus had, for instance, asked Blotius to arrange little jobs for him in Italy, while he was there as pre-

⁷⁴ Gerstinger, *Die Briefe* 175–177, no. lxxxvii (dated 6 April, 1575).

⁷⁵ I.F. von Mosel, *Geschichte der kaiserlichen königlichen Hofbibliothek zu Wien* (Vienna, 1835), p. 32.

⁷⁶ *Ibidem*, *Beilage* I, pp. 302–303; the main parts of the speech are on pp. 299–304.

ceptor of Listhius' son. When Blotius came to Vienna in 1574, he stayed at Sambucus' home during the first months.⁷⁷

Apart from indicating Sambucus' weakening social position at court, the affair undermined the stability of his professional life. It came at a particularly awkward moment, since Sambucus also struggled with heavy debts. He had been involved in a court case at the Hungarian Treasury in Bratislava for many years, and was even forced to sell a part of his library to the emperor.⁷⁸ This was a complicated procedure, and it took years of tedious negotiations before Rudolf II finally settled it in 1578. Perhaps the acquisition of his private library was one of the reasons for the court not to appoint Sambucus as librarian. He would have become the keeper of an imperial collection, which he had previously bought for his own library. Whatever reasons there may have been, Sambucus ended up with a double loss: not only was he forced to sell substantial parts of his library, he also failed to achieve the position he had always hoped for, a position which would have solved his financial problems as well.

Perhaps more disappointing than anything else for Sambucus, however, was the lack of appreciation of his expertise in books and of his merits for the imperial collection. Sambucus had been collecting books and manuscripts for about twenty years; he had donated some important items to the emperor, whose collections he had already inventoried in 1557. Apart from this, he had by now built up a good list of publications, either as author, editor or owner of the source manuscript, testifying to his expertise and the importance of his book collection. This all contrasts sharply with Blotius' activities. He had only been a librarian of the *natio germanica* at the university of Orléans in 1566–1568. As a scholar he had no significant publications to his name. His resumé was nothing compared to that of the experienced scholar Sambucus.

When the comparison is made from this perspective, the injustice done to Sambucus is obvious, perhaps even a bit too obvious. How, then, could this have happened? The choice of the Dutchman Blotius makes it unlikely that it had something to do with Austrian

⁷⁷ Brummel, *Twee ballingen 's lands*, p. 39.

⁷⁸ Gerstinger, "Johannes Sambucus als Handschriftensammler," pp. 279–285.

xenophobia, as Bálint-Nagy has suggested.⁷⁹ Similarly, his religious or (modest) social background cannot have played a decisive role in the selection of Blotius: neither he nor Sambucus was an orthodox Catholic or a born nobleman. Rather, it seems that Sambucus had little talent for courtly diplomacy and less feeling for the intrigues and entanglements at court.

His way of handling the affair with Blotius testifies to this point. Apparently, he was not aware of Crato's reliability as a broker for imperial patronage, nor of his role as a supporter of Blotius' candidacy. Despite his obvious scholarly merits, Sambucus was unable to collect support from other influential patrons. In the courtly arena he had to act on his own accord. Only a few weeks after his indignant letter to Crato, he still tried to influence the appointment by writing to Blotius. In a transparent attempt to get rid of his competitor, Sambucus advised him to accept an offer to become professor in Strasbourg.⁸⁰ Blotius, however, remained in Vienna and accepted the post of librarian. When Blotius, four months later, asked Sambucus to help in cataloguing the imperial collections, he received a reply, which he rightly classified as 'biting' (mordax):⁸¹

Ad recensionem librorum si testimonium oculorum Sambuci sex mensium adhibitum velis, parum te vel quid elucubrem aut ocli supersit, videre dixerim. Saepe ego Caesaris libros vidi; si qui vel probi sint, vel superflui vel substituendi meliores vel aggregandi rariores, meum iudicium accieritis, libenter faciam idque commodo temporum meaeque Rusticationis. Sunt, mi Bloti, alii, qui indicem descripserint et paucioribus mensibus; hac igitur molestia si me sponte involveris, exiguam feres gratiam [?] praesertim ista tua suspicione et querela, multos libros subtractos desiderari [. . .]

(If you want me to be present for compiling a list of books for six months, I would say that you think that I have not enough hard work to do or that I am living a life of leisure. I for my part have often seen the emperor's books. If you would invite me to give my opinion, as to whether some books are sound or superfluous, whether some should be substituted with better ones, or more rare books added, I should be pleased to do so, at the convenience of my time and my country life. But, dear Blotius, there are others who could compile an index, and in fewer months. Therefore, if you entangled me in this

⁷⁹ Bálint-Nagy, "Der weltberühmte Johannes Sambucus," pp. 166–167, 172.

⁸⁰ Gerstinger, *Die Briefe*, pp. 177–178, no. lxxxviii (dated 23 April, 1575).

⁸¹ *Ibidem*, pp. 178–179, no. lxxxix (dated 30 August, 1575).

annoying affair on your own accord, you repay me very little gratitude, especially with that suspicion of yours and the complaint that you wish to see the many books that were secretly taken away.)

Evidently, Sambucus was thoroughly insulted, once more, by the affair of the missing Dioscorides manuscript and, apparently, even more manuscripts were involved. He still addressed the letter with the formula “to my special friend” (*amico singulari*), but this is almost the only sign of decorum he managed to keep up.

After less than a fortnight and an angry reply from Blotius, however, he realised that resentment would not bring him anywhere. Blotius was now a person he could not afford to have against him. In a new letter he tried to restore the relation, albeit not by overt apologies, but by denying his feelings.⁸² If Blotius complained about envious friends, he wrote, this cannot refer to himself. He even congratulated Blotius with his success in gaining so many patrons in such a short time. In his own case, he observed, his “simple and retiring disposition” had prevented his success at court. He even claimed that he had never spoken to or dined with any of the influential courtiers in his twenty-two year career at court, except for Johann Baptist Weber, the imperial vice-chancellor.⁸³

Sambucus here presents himself as more naïve than he actually was. Of course he was not so studious as to neglect his social contacts at court. As we shall see in chapter four, the many dedications in his emblem book, as well as those in his later publications clearly demonstrate an acute social awareness. Clearly, his fellow-humanists did not regard Sambucus as a particularly isolated personality either. Hadrianus Junius in vain tried to establish some form of patronage relation by offering his services.⁸⁴ Also Justus Lipsius had approached

⁸² *Ibidem*, pp. 179–181, no. xc (dated 12 September 1575). Blotius summarised the contents of the letter as “an apology for his envy and hatred etc.” (*purgat se de invidia et odio etc.*).

⁸³ *Ibidem*.

⁸⁴ Junius gives vent to his disappointment in a letter to Plantin from 1565, complaining that he has been writing to Sambucus for more than one and a half years, offering his services, for instance medical or historical texts, in order to keep Sambucus’ goodwill towards him, but that he has received nothing in return (“*Deos omnes atque homines testor, nullas prope dixerim ad ipsum ab anno et semisse a me profectas literas, quibus non testatum fecerim, me ipsius praeclarae erga me voluntati permittere omnia, sive Medici opera, sive Historici uti vellet, quae munia totiens ultro nihil ambienti obtulerat.*”) Junius most clearly invokes a relationship of patronage, when he refers to the proverbial expression that “if there are Maecenas,

Sambucus in an attempt to attain a position at court. During Lipsius' visit to Vienna, in 1572, Sambucus had arranged an audience with Maximilian for him, significantly through mediation of Crato.⁸⁵ In 1574, Lipsius still had enough confidence in Sambucus' influence at court to dedicate his edition of Tacitus' *opera minora* to him (the *Annals* and the *Histories* being dedicated to the emperor).⁸⁶

Moreover, Sambucus was not engaged in scholarly matters exclusively. As was said earlier, he did not shun small, practical jobs at court. For all kinds of matters he was in close contact with Crato. In short, the claim that Weber was his only significant influential broker for patronage is untrue. Rather, it is to be taken as a more subtle hint to Blotius, who knew Weber as his most powerful opponent, not to vex Sambucus: although Blotius may have acquired the help of several powerful courtiers, Sambucus also had his connections.⁸⁷

Thus, by 1575, his career had virtually come to an end. He still managed to maintain his position as court-historiographer, although Blotius tried to take over this office as well in 1576.⁸⁸ This time, though, he did not get what he wanted. Sambucus was re-confirmed in his post in 1578. By then, however, Sambucus' position really had become somewhat isolated. After Maximilian's death in 1576, Rudolf II ascended the throne and he seems to have been less favourably inclined towards Sambucus. Moreover, after a two-year leave in Prague (1578–1581) the court moved permanently to this city in 1583. In 1581 his important patron, Crato, retired from imperial service and moved to Breslau. The imperial historiographer stayed

there will be Virgils" which Sambucus also alluded to in his emblem 'Avaritia huius saeculi' (The greed of this time [170]); he then ends his remark by asking Plantin to regard it as confidential: "Sed promissorum qui modus aut finis? Interim elanguescit promissorum vanitate fervor et hebetatur animi acies. Vere dictum est olim: Sint Mecenas, non deerunt Marones. At haec apud te in sinum effundo, ne latius emanent. [. . .]"; see M. Rooses, J. Denucé (eds.), *Correspondance de Christophe Plantin*, vol. 3 (Antwerp, 1883–1920), pp. 6–7, no. 335.

⁸⁵ See Sambucus' letter to Crato, Gerstinger, *Die Briefe*, no. L, 127–128 (dated 10 December, 1571).

⁸⁶ About Lipsius' attempts to gain a foothold at the court in Vienna, see Karl Enenkel, "Humanismus, Primat des Privaten, Patriotismus und Niederländischer Aufstand: Selbstbildformung in Lipsius' Autobiographie," in *Lipsius in Leiden, Studies in the Life and Works of a great Humanist*, ed. Karl Enenkel and Chris Heesakkers (Voorthuizen, 1997), pp. 34–35.

⁸⁷ About Blotius and Weber, see Brummel, *Twee ballingen 's lands*, pp. 42–43, 59.

⁸⁸ Brummel, *Twee ballingen 's lands*, pp. 52–53.

in Vienna, free from the intrigues, but also isolated from the latest news. But perhaps more than this geographical division, the consequences of the Counter-Reformation had an isolating effect on his position.

Religious Attitude

One of the dominant factors in Sambucus' life that is rarely articulated in his works, is his inclination towards Protestantism. In itself, Sambucus' Protestant background is not surprising. By the second half of the sixteenth century central Europe was a largely Protestant area.⁸⁹ This by no means implies a uniform religious culture; a great variety of religious opinions obtained in the different regions, from Lutheranism in the German speaking areas to the strict doctrine of the Czech Brethren in parts of Bohemia and even some strictly Catholic provinces, such as Tyrol. In Hungary the Reformation secured an especially strong foothold. In the course of the sixteenth century the influence of the Catholic Church was seriously reduced. Despite the introduction of the Counter-Reformation 90 per cent of the population adhered to a form of Protestant creed.⁹⁰

Sambucus was no exception in this respect.⁹¹ Although he never explicitly discussed his religious beliefs, he almost certainly sympathised with Lutheranism. There are several indications for this. In the first place, some opponents accused him explicitly of having Lutheran tendencies. A history of Vienna University refers to Sambucus with a special caveat: "etsi caeterum homo Lutheri dogmatibus depravatus" (but besides he is corrupted by Lutheran ideas).⁹² According to another source, Sambucus received a formal reprimand after having his children baptised by heretic preachers.⁹³ Furthermore, the

⁸⁹ Evans, *The Making*, pp. 3–11.

⁹⁰ Ferenc Szakály, "The Early Ottoman Period, Including Royal Hungary," in *A History of Hungary*, ed. Peter F. Sugar (a.o.) (Bloomington, 1990), pp. 93–94.

⁹¹ Gerstinger, *Die Briefe*, p. 19; Novotny, *Johannes Sambucus*, pp. 117–131.

⁹² Quoted from *Conspectus Historiae Universitatis Viennensis* about the year 1566, by Gerstinger, "Johannes Sambucus als Handschriftensammler," p. 279, n. 5; Téglásy, "Über das Schicksal der Donatio Constantiniana," p. 91.

⁹³ Gerstinger, "Johannes Sambucus als Handschriftensammler," p. 279, n. 5; Novotny, *Johannes Sambucus*, p. 130.

many items of Calvin, Luther and Melanchthon in his library may not be considered as proof of his religious opinions, but at least they point to his special interest in the discussions on Protestant doctrine.⁹⁴ In any case, in the period between 1573 and 1578 the court used this presence of suspect literature in his library as one of the excuses for delaying the payment in the transaction of his books.⁹⁵

As was said previously, the emblem book was not the place to demonstrate marked religious opinions. Still, in some cases Sambucus shows his concern about the confessional conflicts. ‘Mens immota manet’ (The mind stays unmoved [72]) is a case in point (fig. 8). Sambucus here compares the ideal spiritual attitude to the compass: like the needle of the compass that is guided by the North star, so the mind should be firmly directed toward heaven. In the foreground the picture shows a man, kneeling in front of an altar and holding a compass.

After the comparison with the compass Sambucus proceeds with a prayer for peace, ending with a reference to Psalm 42 about the panting hart:

Pax coeat tandem, Christe, unum claudat ovile,
 Lisque tui verbi iam dirimatur ope.
 Da, sitiens anima excelsas sic appetat arces,
 Fontis ut ortivi cervus anhelus aquas.

(Let your flock finally be assembled and united by peace, Christ, and let the conflict be ended by the work of your word. Give that our thirsty soul will long for the lofty strongholds, like the panting hart longs for the water of the rising source.)

In both the comparison and the prayer Sambucus stresses personal spirituality. Each Christian should be guided in his heart by God and His word. Perhaps the most explicit reference to Sambucus’ own sentiments is to be found in the carefully worded ‘Principum negligentia’ (Carelessness of princes [187]), addressed to Joachim Camerarius. After praising the latter’s moderate wisdom, Sambucus here compares the modern leader (“princeps seu pastor”) to the blind Cyclops Polyphemus and observes that people must “ascend to the Olympus”

⁹⁴ See the index auctorum in Monok, Gulyás, *Die Bibliothek Sambucus*, pp. 363–379. See also the references to works by de Bèze and Calvin.

⁹⁵ See Novotny, *Johannes Sambucus*, p. 129.

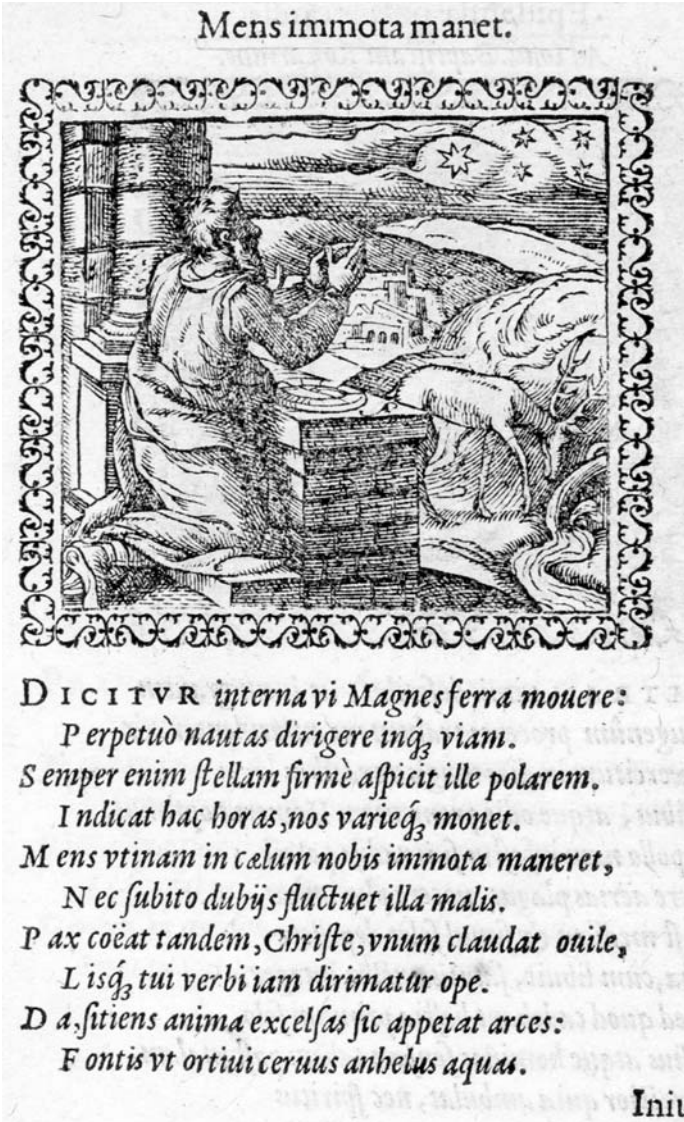


Fig. 8. Sambucus' occasional religious expressions show an emphasis on personal spirituality, for example in 'Mens immota manet' (The mind stays unmoved [72]).

alone, since the leaders no longer show the way. Still, he does not think that “traditional practice” should be abolished altogether.⁹⁶

During the reign of the emperors Ferdinand and Maximilian II Sambucus’ religious attitude did not cause any problems at court. Many courtiers at the time were adherents of the Reformation movements. Maximilian II himself was at least dogmatically ambiguous.⁹⁷ In this climate Sambucus could play the role of intermediary between the emperor and the Catholic irenist Georgius Cassander. This marginal episode in the religious politics of Ferdinand and Maximilian comes to the fore in the correspondence between Sambucus, Cassander and their mutual acquaintance, Jean Matal (Metellus), dating from the years 1564–1565. In 1564 the emperor invited Cassander to a seminar devoted to the issue of the lay use of the chalice. It seems that Sambucus was the person behind these contacts.⁹⁸ He did not only pass on some of Cassander’s works to Maximilian, but he also spoke to Andreas Dudith about Cassander’s ideas.⁹⁹

After Maximilian’s death, however, in 1576, the Counter-Reformation gradually gained force. The tolerant climate at court changed, and life for the Protestant courtiers became more difficult. In a letter to Theodor Zwinger in Basle, of May 1579, Sambucus complains about the religious conflicts and the ensuing climate at court.¹⁰⁰ Some Protestant humanists, such as the botanists Carolus Clusius and Rembertus Dodonaeus were even forced to leave. Sambucus managed to survive as court historian. Probably the distance between Prague and Vienna safeguarded him from too much critical attention. Moreover, Sambucus’ modest position as a historian would not have attracted much attention in courtly circles anyway.

⁹⁶ “Crassus ego tetros fugiendos semper abusus / Censeo, sed veterum cuncta levanda nego. / Quisque suo sensu regitur, conscendit Olympum, / Nec monstrant gressus qui voluere duces.”; for the full text and translation of the epigram, see chapter five, pp. 143–144.

⁹⁷ See especially Fichtner, *Emperor Maximilian II*, pp. 32–49.

⁹⁸ See Georgius Cassander, *Opera quae reperiri potuerunt omnia* [...] (Paris: H. Drouart, 1616), pp. 1179–1180, no. 77: an undated letter to Sambucus in which Cassander declines the invitation to come to Vienna for reasons of health; furthermore Burmannus, *Sylloges*, vol. 2, pp. 288–289, letter by Matal to Cassander, d.d. June 1564, and Sambucus’ letter to Matal d.d. 11 November 1564 in *Illustrium & clarorum virorum epistolae selectiores, superiore saeculo scriptae vel a Belgis, vel ad Belgas* [...] (Leiden: L. Elzevier, 1617), pp. 303–305, no. 59. The original transcription is kept in Leiden University Library, sig. Pap 3.

⁹⁹ See Sambucus’ letter to Matal from 11 November, 1564.

¹⁰⁰ Gerstinger, *Die Briefe*, pp. 250–251, no. cxlii.

Hungarian Patriotism

Next to his religious background, Sambucus' national identity exercised an important influence on his interests and activities. He was a committed patriot of Upper Hungary, today's Slovakia.¹⁰¹ The tumultuous history of Hungary in the sixteenth century makes the patriotic sensitivity comprehensible. After a period of wealth in the fifteenth century, this age brought a devastating combination of internal conflicts and Turkish imperialism to the country.

In the fifteenth century Hungary experienced a period of great prosperity. The reign of King Mátyás Hunyadi (1458–1490), commonly referred to as Matthias Corvinus, had been a golden age of political strength, relative social stability, and outstanding cultural achievements.¹⁰² Matthias had reformed the judicial system, simplified the administration, and reinforced the defence system of the kingdom. Together with his second wife, Beatrice of Aragon, Matthias also introduced a stimulating cultural climate, oriented on the Italian Renaissance. Famous examples of the flowering of humanism in this period are János Vitéz and his nephew Janus Pannonius.¹⁰³

As a contribution to the preservation of the cultural identity of the Hungarian people, Sambucus published literary achievements of the past, such as, Janus Pannonius' *Opera omnia* (Padua, 1559) as well as the important source of Hungarian history, the *Rerum Ungaricarum decades* [...] by Antonius Bonfinius.¹⁰⁴ In the latter work Bonfinius, an Italian humanist who worked in Buda as King Matthias' court historian, narrates the history of Hungary in a wider European context. The work had originally been finished in 1497, and Sambucus planned to continue the historiography to his own time.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰¹ Sambucus seems to have distinguished between Ungaria (Hungary) and Pannonia (Upper Hungary), see Anton Vantuch, "Sambucus Pannonius Tyrnaviensis. Pokus o portrét" in Eudovít Holotik, Anton Vantuch (eds.), *Humanizmus a renesancia na Slovensku v 15.–16. storočí* (Bratislava, 1967), pp. 302–314 (with a summary in German).

¹⁰² For a general, concise overview of Hungarian history, see C.A. Macartney, *Hungary: A Short History* (Edinburgh, 1962), and Sugar, *A History of Hungary*.

¹⁰³ For Hungarian humanism in this period, see Birnbaum, "Hungarian Humanism," pp. 293–334.

¹⁰⁴ Sambucus' edition of Bonfinius was first published in Basel by J. Oporinus, 1568, later in Frankfurt on the Main by A. Wechelus, 1581. About Sambucus' editions of Bonfinius, see Birnbaum, *Humanists in a Shattered World*, p. 63, and Gerstinger, *Die Briefe*, pp. 291–293.

¹⁰⁵ For a short review of Sambucus as a historian and the influence of his years

The period after Matthias' reign was considerably blacker indeed. From 1490 to 1526, a series of weaker monarchs led the country, introducing a period of steady decline. The power of the higher nobility grew, and taxes that were imposed earlier by Matthias were reduced or even abolished. At the same time, the pressure on the peasantry increased, which stirred serious social unrest. Eventually, in 1514, this led to an uprising of the peasants led by György Dózsa against the feudal landlords. The rebellion was violently repressed by the lords under the commander János Szapolyai. After their defeat the peasantry were condemned to universal slavery. This was formalised in the same year by the codification of customary law by the jurist István Werböczy.

The new legal system, known as the 'tripartitum' also emphasised the equal status of both the landlords and the lesser nobility. With this renewed confirmation of their position, Werböczy's tripartitum was of prime importance for Hungary's lesser nobility. This may have been one of the reasons why Sambucus published an edition of the text in 1572.¹⁰⁶ Furthermore, the lesser nobility managed to ascertain their membership of the national Council. In actual practice, though, there remained a great difference in power between the aristocracy and the lesser nobles.

Apart from the instability of the internal political situation, the Turkish forces still constituted a major exterior threat. On 29 August 1526 the Hungarian forces were defeated by the Turkish troops in the Battle of Mohács. The country was subsequently split up in three parts. The Turkish sultan Süleyman 'The Magnificent' now controlled Buda and central Hungary. Meanwhile, he allowed the region of Transylvania to form their own monarchy, on the condition that they be loyal to the Turkish rulers. Szapolyai became the first king of this vasa state. In order to forestall advancement of the Turks to Vienna, Ferdinand of Habsburg took control of the western and northern parts of Hungary, including Upper Hungary.

Mohács was a turning point in Hungarian history. Buda was captured by the sultan in 1541. Ferdinand reigned from Vienna, and

in Padua on his method of writing history, see Tibor Kardos, "Dejepisné dielo Jána Sambuca," in *Humanizmus a renesancia na Slovensku v 15.-16. storočí*, ed. Eudovít Holotík, Anton Vantuch (Bratislava, 1967), pp. 315-320 (with a summary in German).

¹⁰⁶ *Tripartitum opus* [...] (Vienna: Blasius Eberus, 1572); see Monok, Gulyás, *Die Bibliothek Sambucus*, no. 2116.

since his accession to the throne as emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, Hungary was only a part of his task. Evidently, this also had a great impact on Hungarian cultural life. Before Mohács, there was an independent kingdom, with several important centres of learning and culture. After the battle, Hungarian humanists were forced to find employment outside Hungary. In some respects, this actually boiled down to a form of exile.

Apart from devoting himself to historiography, Sambucus helped to preserve Hungary's cultural heritage in many other ways, and contributed to it as well. In the 1560s, he was an active member of the circle of poets around Stephanus Radetius (Radéczy), bishop of Bratislava.¹⁰⁷ He also made maps of Transylvania and Hungary that were later included in Ortelius' renowned atlas *Theatrum orbis terrarum* (1570).¹⁰⁸ Another example is the allegorical poem 'Pannonia ad Germaniam', published in his edition of two dialogues of Plato.¹⁰⁹ In this poem, cast in the form of a letter sent to her sister, Pannonia complains extensively about her misery and summons Germania to come to her help.

In the emblems Sambucus, too, demonstrates his attachment to Hungary and his concern for its tragic state of affairs. In the dedicatory emblem to the emperor, Maximilian is asked to relieve Hungary's pain inflicted by the atrocities of the Turks. Similarly, in 'Mathiae Corvini symbolum' (The coat of arms of Matthias Corvinus [140]) the glorious past is presented as an example to be emulated by Maximilian II. A grimmer tenor is found in Anthonius Verantius' epigram,

¹⁰⁷ Other members of this circle were, for instance, Nicolaus Istvánffy, Georgius Purkircher, and Nicasius Ellebodium. See Ladislaus Varga, "Quibusnam cum viris doctissimis Europae Sambucus coniunctiones litterarias inierit?," *Acta Classica Universitatis Scientiarum Debreceniensis*, 3 (1967), pp. 114–115; see also the introduction to Nicolaus Istvánffy, *Carmina*, ed. J. Holub and L. Juhász (Leipzig, 1935), pp. iii–v. For the connection of these humanists with bishop Oláh, see Márta Fata, *Ungarn, das Reich der Stephanskronen, im Zeitalter der Reformation und Konfessionalisierung. Multiethnizität, Land und Konfession 1500–1700* (Münster, 2000), pp. 76–77.

¹⁰⁸ For Sambucus' activities as a cartographer, see Robert W. Karrow Jr., *Mapmakers of the Sixteenth Century and Their Maps. Bio-Bibliographies of the Cartographers of Abraham Ortelius, 1570* (Chicago, 1993), pp. 457–463.

¹⁰⁹ Sambucus, *Dialogi duo Platonis, Alcibiades secundus et Axiochus [. . .]* (Viennae: M. Zimmerman, 1557). Interpreted by Mihály Imre, "Der Topos 'Querela Hungariae' in der Literatur des 16. Jahrhunderts. Paulus Rubigallus-Ursinus Velius" in *Iter Germanicum. Deutschland und die Reformierte Kirche in Ungarn im 16–17. Jahrhundert*, ed. András Szabó (Budapest, 1999), 39–117, esp. pp. 53–56.

used for the emblem ‘De Turcarum Tyranno’ (About the tyrant of the Turks [200]), dedicated to Maximilian in his capacity of King of Bohemia. Paraphrasing the classical proverb ‘let them hate me, so long as they fear me’, he ends his demonising description of Süleyman the Magnificent with a radical call for action:¹¹⁰

Frustra igitur pacem, frustra omnia caetera tentas,
Ense opus est, quoniam quos timet, hos et amat.

(In vain, therefore, you try peace, in vain you try anything else: the sword is needed, because he loves the ones he fears.)

Another emblem, ‘Virtus unita valet’ (Virtue is powerful when united [62], fig. 9), is entirely devoted to Hungary’s internal situation by addressing two kings, Ferdinand and János Sigismund Szapolyai (who had succeeded his father in 1540) of the divided country with an ardent plea for unity:

Fluctibus in mediis patriae tot cladibus actae
Concordi proceres subveniatis ope.
Nec vos exosae mentes propriaeque salutis
Oblitae exagitent et nota turpis alat.
Huniadis memores ac Regis, quaeso, Mathiae
Estote, ad quorum nomina Thurca tremit.
Diversum ne vos studium disiungat inique,
Colligat in patriae vos amor unus opem.

(In the middle of this turmoil of our so often struck fatherland, please make a united effort to help as leaders. May no hateful minds, forgetting personal safety, stir you up, not ugly slur feed you. I beg you, remember Hunyadi and King Matthias, whose names have the Turks trembling. May no disparate zeal unduly divide you, but may one single love for the fatherland collect the strength in you.)

The prosperity of Hungary in the age of Matthias Corvinus and his father János Hunyadi should urge the present leaders to stand united and work for the Hungarian case. Correspondingly, Sambucus devoted his knowledge and skills as a scholar to further the same goal.

¹¹⁰ ‘Oderint, dum metuant’, see August Otto, *Die Sprichwörter und sprichwörtlichen Redensarten der Römer* (Leipzig, 1890; repr. Hildesheim, 1988), p. 252, no. 1277.



Fig. 9. 'Virtus vnita valet' (Virtue is powerful when united [62]) calls for unity in the divided kingdom of Hungary.

The Philologist

Together, these social, political, religious and national factors in Sambucus' life constitute the backdrop against which his humanist activities should be seen. His scholarly interest in the classics is reflected in his activities as an editor and collector of classical texts. Nowadays he is not considered as an outstanding philologist: his main importance for textual criticism seems to lie in his collecting activities.¹¹¹ Nonetheless, before the *Emblemata* appeared, he had already published a considerable number of text editions.

These early publications are mainly didactic in nature and demonstrate his proclivity for Greek literature. Among these publications are, for instance, a schoolbook edition of Homer (1550), a selection of speeches from Xenophon (1552), and a collection of texts on the art of writing letters, also published by Oporinus in the same year.¹¹² Especially the latter two works are explicitly presented as didactic tools. The inclusion in the Xenophon edition of Sambucus' lecture on the didactic question as to why schoolboys should study rhetoric before poetry positions the work in the same category. In the same period he published a selection of the dialogues of Lucian, which was gradually expanded into a complete edition by 1560. The edition contains, apart from the Greek text, Latin translations drawn from Mycillus, Erasmus and More. A Latin translation of two dia-

¹¹¹ E.J. Kenney, *The Classical Text. Aspects of Editing in the Age of the Printed Book* (Berkeley, 1974), pp. 79–82; for a survey of Sambucus' philological attainments see the article by Borsa and Walsh about Sambucus' auto-bibliography and the specified lists of his works in Vantuch, pp. 211–215, and Ladislaus Varga, “De operibus philologicis et poeticis Ioannis Sambuci,” *Acta antiqua academiae scientiarum hungaricae*, 14 (1966), 231–244. Finally, Gerstinger provides information from Sambucus' letters about the genesis of (several of) his publications, *Die Briefe*, pp. 285–318.

¹¹² The edition of Homer: *Odysseia* and *Ilias* (Strasburg: W. Cephalaeus, 1550); that of Xenophon: *Δημηγορίαι. Hoc est conciones aliquot ex libris Xenophontis de Paedia Cyri, breviores et selectiores versae pro tyronibus Graecae linguae [. . .] Additae sunt duae Orationes contrariae, Critiae & Theramenis, ex libro secundo de Rebus gestis Graecorum. Ad haec, Oratio, quod oratores ante poetas a pueris cognoscendi sint, eodem [. . .] autore. Adiectis quoque eiusdem Poematiis aliquot, aliorum propediem edendorum velut primitiis.* (Basel: J. Oporinus, 1552); furthermore, the *Epistolarum conscribendarum methodus, una cum exemplis, incerti auctoris, Graece & Latine, in utriusque linguae studiosorum gratiam nunc multo quam antea & emendatior, & locupletior edita [. . .]* (Basel: J. Oporinus, 1552). For these latter works, see also the entries in Frank Hieronymus a.o. (eds.), *Ἐν βασιλείᾳ πόλει τῆς Γερμανίας. Griechischer Geist aus Basler Pressen* (Basel, 1992), nos. 55 and 54 respectively.

logues of Plato, the Alcibiades II and the Axiochus was published in 1598, together with an interpretation of the text.¹¹³ As frequently indicated in the title, these editions were made for didactic, rather than purely scholarly purposes. The students of Greek were helped by a Latin translation of the Greek and the explanatory comments concerned moral interpretations, rather than learned textual emendations.

Around the same time as the publication of the emblems, Plantin also published a number of texts edited by Sambucus. The first of these works is an edition of Horace's *Ars poetica* (1564), including a text of Horace's letter and a Latin *paraphrasis* by Sambucus.¹¹⁴ This second part is divided into a commentary by Sambucus (pp. 21–70) and a dialogue (between 'Philometer' and 'Exegeta') on the text (pp. 70–188). Sambucus seems here less interested in textual criticism than in moral issues related to passages in Horace's text.

Apart from these school editions of classical authors, Sambucus also prepared editions of a more exclusively scholarly philological nature. His Latin version of Diogenes Laertius, for example, "corrected in more than a thousand places," is presented as a work for those who wish to publish an improved Greek version: *De vita et moribus philosophorum libri x. Plusquam mille in locis restituti, & emendati ex fide dignis vetustis exemplaribus Graecis, ut inde Graecum exemplum etiam possit restitui* (Antwerp: C. Plantin, 1566).¹¹⁵ Furthermore, many of his editions were prompted by the wish to publish manuscripts from his own collection. In these cases the collector Sambucus supplied the scholarly world with new variants and sometimes even with hitherto unpublished texts. In 1565 Plantin published Sambucus' edition of the fragments of Petronius.¹¹⁶ Sambucus claimed to have corrected the previous edition, hitherto based on a single manuscript, in at least fifty passages, on the basis of another one in his possession. This text was indeed a major step forward.¹¹⁷ Similarly, the *editio*

¹¹³ *Dialogi duo Platonis Alcibiades et Axiochus interprete Joanne Sambuco* [...] (Vienna: M. Zimmermann, 1558).

¹¹⁴ *Ars poetica Horatii, et in eam paraphrasis, et παρεκβολαί sive commentariolum* [...] (Antwerp: C. Plantin, 1564). See Voet, *The Plantin Press*, no. 1377.

¹¹⁵ See Voet, *Plantin Press*, no. 1083.

¹¹⁶ *Satyrici fragmenta, restituta et aucta, e bibliotheca Johannis Sambuci* (Antwerp: C. Plantin, 1565). See also Voet, *Plantin Press*, no. 1965.

¹¹⁷ See Varga, "De operibus philologicis," pp. 238–239.

princeps of Aristaenetus' *Love epistles*, published by Plantin in 1566, is also based on a manuscript Sambucus possessed.¹¹⁸ In this case, however, one may question whether Sambucus can be regarded as the editor of the text. He had simply sent the manuscript to Plantin, who had it transcribed by his son-in-law Franciscus Raphelengius.¹¹⁹ This is not the case with Sambucus' edition of twenty of the comedies of Plautus, again published by Plantin.¹²⁰ This edition is based on Camerarius' 1552 edition with his annotations and those of Carolus Langius, Adrien Turnèbe and Hadrianus Junius. His production met with a positive reception in his own time, for example in Gesner's famous bibliography.¹²¹ In the modern histories of classical scholarship his name is seldom found. The only edition that is mentioned, is the *editio princeps* of Aristaenetus.¹²² Sambucus' greatest contribution to textual scholarship seems to have been his collection of manuscripts and his generosity in lending them to fellow-humanists. This is testified by the phrase 'e bibliotheca J. Sambuci' on the title-page of a considerable number of first editions of different texts.¹²³

The Collector: Books and Coins

In all, Sambucus' prime importance as a humanist lies in his collecting activities. To some extent these activities were part of his role

¹¹⁸ Aristaenetus, *ΕΠΙΣΤΟΛΑΙ ΕΓΩΤΙΚΑΙ τινὰ τῶν παλαιῶν Ἡρώων Ἐπιτάφια. E bibliotheca C.V. Ioan. Sambuci* (Antwerp: C. Plantin, 1566).

¹¹⁹ See Voet, *Plantin Press*, no. 593.

¹²⁰ See footnote 3, and Voet, *Plantin Press*, no. 2077.

¹²¹ Conrad Gesner, Joannes Jacobus Frisius, *Bibliotheca instituta et collecta* [...] (Zürich: C. Froschouerus, 1574) p. 412; similarly, in the 1583 edition, p. 493.

¹²² John Edwin Sandys, *A History of Classical Scholarship* vol. 2 (Cambridge, 1908) 105.

¹²³ See for example the editions by the historian and orientalist Joannes Leunclavius: Michael Glycas, *Annales* [...] *Siculi, qui lectori praeter alia cognitu iucunda & utilia, Byzantinam historiam universam exhibent: Nunc primum Latinam in linguam transscripti & editi* [...] *Ex Io. Sambuci V. C. Bibliotheca* [...] (Basel: E. Episcopus and heirs to N. Episcopus, 1572); Constantinus Manassis, *Annales* [...]: *Nunc primum in lucem prolati, & de Graecis Latini facti* [...] *Ex Io. Sambuci V. C. bibliotheca* [...] (Basel: E. Episcopus and heirs to N. Episcopus, 1573); *LX Librorum Βασιλικῶν, id est, Universi iuris Romani, auctoritate principum Rom. Graecam in linguam traduci, Ecloga sive Synopsis, hactenus desiderata, nunc edita* [...] *Ex Ioan. Sambuci V. C. Bibliotheca. Item Novellarum antehac non publicarum Liber. Adiuncta sunt & Adnotationes interpretis, quibus multa leges multaque loca iuris civilis restituntur & emendantur* [...] (Basel: E. Episcopus and heirs to N. Episcopus, 1575).

as a humanist in service of the court. The emperor usually appreciated books and antiquities presented to him with rewards and new privileges. In this sense, part of Sambucus' journeys through Europe can be seen as undertaken in the service of the emperor. In letters from 1563, for instance, Sambucus announces his return to Vienna to emperor Ferdinand and (then still) archduke Maximilian by stressing the profitable material results of the travels: apart from their general usefulness, these commodities and the work carried out by humanists glorified the emperor and the archduke themselves.¹²⁴ However, it was not merely a form of commerce for the court. In a less formal letter written some months later, Sambucus indicates he is "eager as a child" to see all what he had bought and sent home in the past years.¹²⁵ The collecting activities were Sambucus' own initiative; he remained the owner of the collections, and he collected according to his own interests.

Sambucus was particularly successful as a collector of books and rare manuscripts. In his emblems this passion is reflected clearly in 'Usus libri, non lectio prudentes facit' (The use of books, not merely reading makes one intelligent [56]), devoted to collecting old and rare books (fig. 10). Here Sambucus addresses his fellow-bibliophile Fulvio Orsini, the keeper of the library of cardinals Ranuccio and Alessandro Farnese. The emblem, treated more extensively later (pp. 127–128), stresses that the love for books should be put to use for the benefit of a wider public. In the picture scholars are portrayed, one of them wearing spectacles, reading books; in the background books of all sizes can be distinguished.

By the time the emblems were published, Sambucus had already built up quite a collection. He started collecting manuscripts in Paris in the early fifties. Later he expanded his hunt to Italian territory. On his most successful quest for rare and interesting manuscripts and codices, he visited Naples, Milan, Bologna and again Padua. In Naples he managed to purchase the remains of the library of the Aragon family in 1562.¹²⁶ For an estimate of the size of these collections, it is interesting to know that 2618 volumes of printed works

¹²⁴ Gerstinger, *Die Briefe*, pp. 60–62, no. ix (to Maximilian, d.d. 18 January 1563) and pp. 65–66, no. xi (to emperor Ferdinand I, d.d. 28 September 1563).

¹²⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 67–69, no. xiii (to Fulvio Orsini, d.d. 13 April, 1564).

¹²⁶ Gerstinger, "Johannes Sambucus als Handschriftensammler," pp. 314–319.

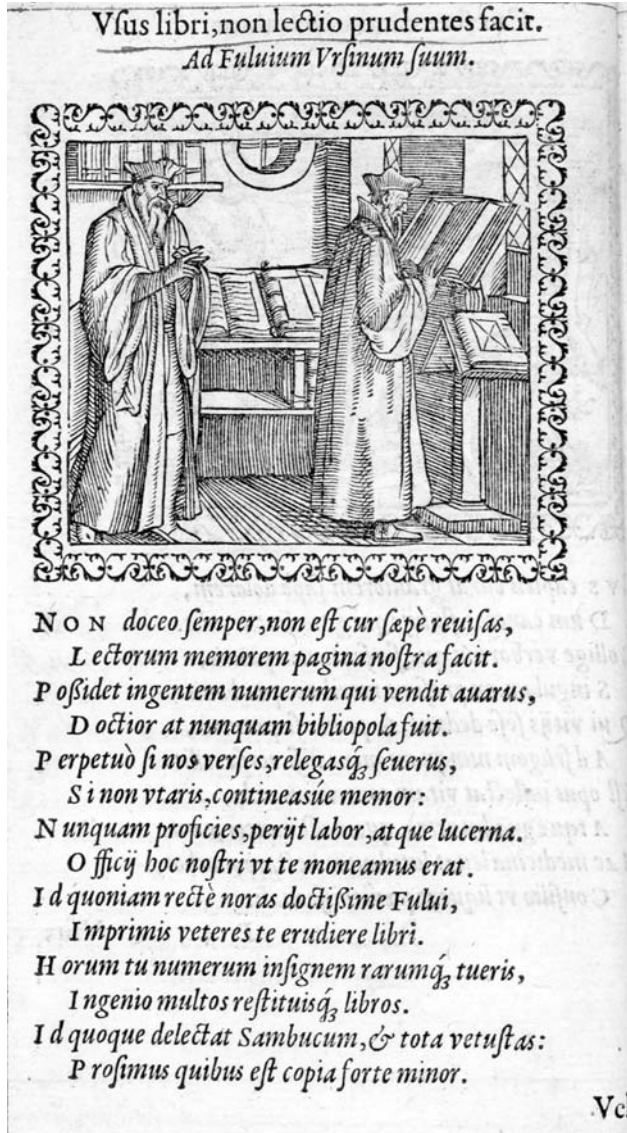


Fig. 10. Scholars in action: 'Usus libri, non lectio prudentes facit' (The use of books, not merely reading makes one intelligent [56]) is a true emblem of late Renaissance humanism.

were sold after his death to the emperor and incorporated in the imperial library. A considerable number of these volumes were *Sammelbände*. Sambucus' library was subsequently fitted into the whole of the imperial collections (which often meant that duplicates were sold), but large parts of the original collection are still kept in the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek in Vienna.¹²⁷ Some years before, in 1578, Sambucus had sold 530 manuscripts to the emperor.¹²⁸

It was this huge library that he assembled, rather than the publication of the *Emblemata*, that earned him a reputation already during his life. As Gerstinger has shown in his analysis of the manuscript collection, Sambucus' orientation in collecting was primarily philological and antiquarian.¹²⁹ His aim was not only to collect material for his personal interest, but also to publish authoritative editions of the texts. Moreover, he did not keep the collection to himself but also helped colleagues by lending manuscripts for new text editions. Thus, together with the contacts at court, the library constituted Sambucus' most important asset within the Republic of Letters.

The results of this generous lending policy are visible in his auto-bibliography, where several of these editions—produced by others—are listed.¹³⁰ At the same time large parts of his correspondence are devoted to practical problems involved in this exchange of rare manuscripts. A manuscript with a collection of letters by the fourteenth-century pioneer of Greek studies Manuel Chrysoloras, for instance, was sent to Joachim Camerarius (the elder) for publication in 1568, but it was never returned to Sambucus. After Camerarius' death in 1574 Sambucus asked the letters to be sent to the Leiden professor Bonaventura Vulcanius. He received the manuscript, but, yet again, neither published, nor returned it. In 1583 Sambucus vents his irritation in his auto-bibliography where the edition is listed in the section of future plans: "Chrysolorae epistolas [. . .] magnis sumptibus a se collectas, Vulcanius detinet" (Chrysoloras' letters,

¹²⁷ Monok, Gulyás, *Die Bibliothek Sambucus*, p. 8; the catalogue specifies the current signature of the particular copies in the Nationalbibliothek.

¹²⁸ Gerstinger, "Johannes Sambucus als Handschriftensammler," pp. 283–284.

¹²⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 291–348, esp. p. 291.

¹³⁰ *Catalogus librorum quos Ioan. Sambucus vel suos typis edidit vel bibliothecae aliena pig-nora prodidit, vel praecipue adhuc divulganda prae manibus habet* (Vienna: [L. Nassinger], 1583); about this single leaf catalogue, see Borsa and Walsh, "Eine gedruckte Selbstbibliographie," pp. 128–133.

collected at great cost by him [= Sambucus] are withheld by Vulcanius.)¹³¹

A prominent feature of Sambucus' antiquarian interest is his numismatic activity. As early as 1551 he published a revised and augmented edition of John Hüttich's biography of Roman emperors, with portraits taken from ancient coins, first published in 1525.¹³² But he was also an active collector himself. By 1559 he is in possession of an impressive collection of coins. In this year the Netherlandish antiquarian Hubertus Goltzius came to Padua to visit Sambucus for this reason, as part of his tour through Europe of famous numismatic collections. Goltzius would later be the illustrator and publisher of several important numismatic histories written by Marcus Laurinus.¹³³ Furthermore, during his stay in Paris in the period 1560–1561, Sambucus was in close contact with his fellow-numismatists Henri de Mesmes and the royal treasurer and eminent book collector Jean Grolier.

With his numismatic activities, Sambucus was a man of his time. Especially in the second half of the sixteenth century a new interest in numismatics can be discerned. Before, the fascination was concerned primarily with the portraits on the obverse sides, but in this period attention turned to the reverse sides as well, as can be seen in the publication of a number of influential books on the subject by among others Enea Vico (1548), Guillaume Rouille (1553), Jacopo Strada (1553), Guillaume Du Choul (1556) and Hubertus Goltzius (1557).¹³⁴ In general, ancient coins were considered as instruments to reconstruct the classical past. In most cases, however, this ambitious claim came down to the use of coins as illustrations of written historical sources.¹³⁵ But the interest in numismatics was also connected to the concern for iconography and visual references. Especially

¹³¹ Ibidem, and Gerstinger, *Die Briefe*, pp. 294–296.

¹³² See the catalogue with bibliographical data in Milan Pelc, *Illustrium Imagines. Dat Porträtbuch der Renaissance* (Leiden etc., 2002), pp. 197–201, nos. 86–90.

¹³³ Werner Waterschoot, "Johannes Sambucus und die niederländischen Numismatiker" [paper delivered at the International Conference of Emblem Studies, Munich 1999.]; see also Francis Haskell, *History and its Images. Art and the Interpretation of the Past* (New Haven-London, 1993), pp. 16–19.

¹³⁴ About the early development of numismatics, see Haskell, *History and its Images*, pp. 13–25.

¹³⁵ Ibidem, 21.

the reverse sides lent themselves for allegorical interpretations of contemporary, mannerist taste. At this point, emblems and numismatics come together.

The most remarkable example of this is the collection of prize medals from the Altdorf academy (later university), dating from 1577 to 1626. These medals were not only given to talented pupils as a reward for their study achievements, but also served as an instrument in teaching rhetorical skills. Each year several pupils were selected to deliver an oration interpreting the image depicted on the obverse of the medal. The image of the medals and the texts of the orations were published by Levinus Hulsius in two books as *Emblemata anniversaria* [. . .] (Nuremberg, 1597 and 1617). The illustrations were made by Johannes Sibmacher, who was also responsible for the plates in Camerarius' medal-shaped *Symbola*.¹³⁶

More than a decade before the Altdorf orations started Sambucus included part of his collection of ancient coins as a separate section to his emblem book, and dedicated it to Jean Grolier.¹³⁷ Sambucus can be seen as a representative of the new, antiquarian direction in numismatics. His interest in coins primarily concerns the lessons to be gained from the reverse sides. In his emblem 'Antiquitatis studium' (The study of antiquity [164]) Sambucus stresses the value of coins in instructing in ancient wisdom:

Effodiuntur opes irritamenta bonorum,
Nec poterit nummos ulla abolere dies.
Aerea testantur fuerint quibus aurea secla,
Multorumque monent quae tacuere libri.

(The riches are excavated as incentives for good deeds, and no day can ever efface coins. The golden coins testify of those who lived in

¹³⁶ Frederick John Stopp, *The Emblems of the Altdorf Academy. Medals and Medal Orations 1577–1626* (London, 1974), esp. pp. 1–16; for the relation between the Altdorf medals and the genesis of Camerarius' *Symbola* see furthermore Jan Papy, "Joachim Camerarius's *Symbolorum et emblematum centuriae quatuor*" in Enenkel and Visser (eds.), *Mundus Emblematicus*, pp. 209, 210–213.

¹³⁷ About the section with coins in the *Emblemata*, see Maria R.-Alföldi, "Zu den frühen Illustrationen numismatischer Werke: die *Emblemata* des Johannes Sambucus, 1531–1584," in Rainer Albert, Reiner Cunz (eds.), *Wissenschaftsgeschichte der Numismatik. Beiträge zum 17. Deutschen Numismatikertag 3.-5. März 1995 in Hannover* (Speyer, 1995), pp. 71–95; John Cunnally, *Images of the Illustrious: The Numismatic Presence in the Renaissance* (Yale, 1999), esp. pp. 105–123; and, more in general, for Sambucus as a numismatist, see Werner Waterschoot, "Johannes Sambucus und die niederländischen Numismatiker."

a golden age, and they point out many things about which books have been silent.)

From this emblem it is not clear, however, how exactly Sambucus supposes the coins communicate their lessons. According to him, the extra merit of coins over books seems to reside in the symbolic nature of the picture, rather than to their quality of naturalistic representation of the past. Still, the method for reading the coins remains unclear.

Likewise, in the numismatic appendix Sambucus does not explain his method. There is no commentary, nor a general introduction to the subject. Thus, the criteria for the selection of coins are unclear. Until now, it has been suggested that the examples are either meant to represent the variety of scenes in coins, “a kind of microcosm of the Roman Empire” (Cunnally), or to serve as conversation pieces, because of their narrative character (Alföldi).¹³⁸

It is, however, questionable whether such a programmatic nature should be assumed at all. In the dedicatory letter to Grolier, Sambucus presents the section simply as a selection of highlights from his collection in tribute to Grolier.¹³⁹ Sambucus situates his activities in his broader collecting strategy and proudly refers to some of his rarest items, which struck “even the most important cardinals” in Rome with admiration.¹⁴⁰ Thus, it seems, the publication of his personal collection was more important to Sambucus than any emblematic lessons of the particular coins.

After Sambucus' Death

After Sambucus died on 13 July of the year 1584, ten of his friends and clients published a collection of epitaphs. The booklet contains

¹³⁸ Cunnally, *Images of the Illustrious*, p. 108; Alföldi, “Zu den frühen Illustrationen,” p. 82.

¹³⁹ In the expanded editions, Sambucus adds in an elegant way that this selection is only a small, but exclusive selection, worthy of Grolier; Sambucus to Grolier, March 1565, edn. 1566, p. 256, editions 1569 and later, p. 289: “in tuo me futurum semper aere hisce aliquot nu[m]mis aereis testari volui: nam si plures, quos alii etiam pro insignibus produnt, et nonnulla argentea ponere vellem, iustus libellus vix sufficeret.”

¹⁴⁰ *Ibidem*.

eleven poems by little known German authors.¹⁴¹ The praise for Sambucus is of course unequivocal and it is not this aspect that makes the collection an interesting one. It is rather the choice of topics for praise and the background of the admirers that are telling indications of Sambucus' status at the time. His capacities as a scholar are praised in very general terms: nowhere is any reference made to particular publications, such as his emblems, as is apparent in this fragment from Kaspar Franck's contribution:

Abstrusas potuit naturae exquirere causas
 Astraque iudicio subdidit alta suo.
 Novit et herbarum vires usumque medendi,
 Evolvitque libros, Barthole Magne, tuos.
 Hinc doctoratus titulo atque insignibus auctus,
 Innumera patriam iuvat et auxit ope.

(He could investigate the secret causes of nature, and he exposed the high stars to his judgement. He also knew the healing force of herbs and the method for treatment. He explained your books, great Bartholus. Hence, enriched with the title and insignia of a doctor, he helped and reinforced his fatherland with immense strength.)

Rather than expanding on Sambucus' achievements as a scholar, Franck praises Sambucus for his "knowledge of herbs" and his talent as a physician. The reference to a doctoral dissertation about the works of "Bartholus Magnus" is problematic and cannot be verified.¹⁴² The reference to the doctoral research is probably aimed at rehabilitating the damaged scholarly reputation of the deceased, after the affair with the Viennese Faculty of Medicine.

Most revealing in the complete collection of *carmina funebria* is the absence of the famous members of the Republic of Letters. In sharp contrast to the multitude of renowned scholars represented in the emblems and the impressive network in his correspondence, only a handful of local humanists pay a final tribute to Sambucus.

¹⁴¹ See *Carmina aliquot funebria de obitu magnifici et clarissimi viri, Ioannis Sambuci Tūnaviensis* [...] (Leipzig: Joannes Steinman, 1584) [Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna, sig. 44.V. 142]. The poems are by Paulus Fabricius (imperial mathematician and physician); Joannes Cupius; M. Nicolaus Lissca (from Olomouc); M. Huldericus Schoberus (from Lübben, Prussia); Samuel Reinhardt (from Brieg, Prussia); Kaspar Franck (from Liegnitz, Prussia); Antonius Steckherr (from Zittau, Sachsen); Joannes Girbertus (from the region of Thüringen); Johannes Bartsch (from Schweidnitz, Prussia); and Casparus Neander (from Leubus, Prussia).

¹⁴² The epithet 'magnus' reminds of Albertus Magnus, but perhaps the Bartholus meant here is the Bologna lawyer Bartolo de Sassoferrato (1313–1357).

In fact, Clusius had made an attempt to organise such a publication. Shortly after Sambucus' death he had informed Lipsius. He asked him to contribute an epitaph and to urge the Netherlandish humanists Janus Doussa and Victor Giselinus to do the same.¹⁴³ He also informed Camerarius and made a similar request to him for funeral poems from the poet Paulus Melissus Schede and the humanist and physician Joannes Posthius.¹⁴⁴ More than one year later, a last reference to this plan can be found, when Clusius confirms to Camerarius that he received his contribution in good order.¹⁴⁵ After this, there is no further trace of the project. The publication never materialised.

Thus, the background of Sambucus' entire life constitutes the proper context to gauge the significance and functionality of his emblem book. Rather than taking the *Emblemata* as a starting-point, the historical setting in which the book was invented and produced may offer the best interpretational frame of reference before targeting the book itself. After the world of Sambucus, this leads us to the career of the other important personage in the production of the book, the publisher.

¹⁴³ See the letter to Lipsius, dated 10 July 1584, *Iusti Lipsii Epistolae*, ed. M.A. Nauwelaerts, vol. 2 (Brussels, 1983), no. 356.

¹⁴⁴ F.W.T. Hunger, *Charles de l'Escluse (Carolus Clusius) Nederlandsch Kruidkundige 1526-1609*, vol. 2, (The Hague, 1943), pp. 135, 140.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 141.

CHAPTER TWO

THE WORLD OF THE PUBLISHER

Sambucus' life constitutes an illuminating context for his emblems, but equally important is the other force behind the publication, the Antwerp publisher Christopher Plantin. However crucial the author of the epigrams may be as an inventor of the emblem, he is usually not the leading person behind its production. Emblem books are in fact rarely the result of one man's efforts and the author of the texts is in most cases not responsible for the final result.¹ Although the precise influence of publishers in the production of emblem books differs per case, their task was seldom confined to carrying out the instructions of the author. There are good reasons, for instance, to label Gabriel Rollenhagen's *Nucleus emblematum* as a collection of the engraver and publisher Crispijn de Passe, or Jacobus Typotius' *Symbola heroica* as a work by the artist Aegidius Sadeler or the collector Ottavio da Strada.²

This affects the way we can approach the emblem book in several ways. Apart from the common interests of authors and publishers, there are important differences as well: the publisher was a professional, commercial book producer, who had to sell books for a living. In most cases the author's income, however, did not depend on his publications exclusively. Books may often have been profitable to the authors in various ways, but book sales were rarely an important source of revenue for its writer. This difference often entails another, relating to the contents of the publication. Whereas an author was inherently interested in the text, a publisher may well have maintained a considerable professional distance from his products.

¹ Alison Saunders, "The Sixteenth-Century French Emblem Book: Writers and Printers," *Studi francesi*, 92 (1987), 173–190; Scholz, "The 1531 Augsburg Edition," pp. 251–254.

² For De Passe as the dominant inventor of the *Nucleus emblematum*, see Iija Veldman and Clara Klein, "The Painter and the Poet: the Nucleus Emblematum by De Passe and Rollenhagen," in Enenkel and Visser (eds.), *Mundus Emblematicus*, pp. 267–299; for the *Symbola heroica* see M.E.H.N. Mout, "A Useful Servant of Princes: The Netherlands Humanist Jacobus Typotius at the Prague Imperial Court Around 1600," *Acta Comeniana* 13 (1999), pp. 27–49, esp. pp. 37–47.

Like the biographical exploration in the previous chapter, the examination of Plantin's policies is not focused on Sambucus' emblems exclusively. It is meant to situate the work in a wider book historical context including other emblem books. It is often said that Plantin stirred the emblem vogue in the Low Countries by publishing the emblems of the authors who would later be regarded as 'the big three' humanist emblem writers: Alciato, Sambucus and Junius.³ These editions had a distinct influence on the development of the emblem genre in the Low Countries, the dominant area of emblem production in the seventeenth century. What place, however, did the production of emblem books have in Plantin's business activities? What does this context tell us about the commercial status of the emblem? The business administration preserved in the Museum Plantin-Moretus offers a unique opportunity to find answers to these questions, and thus enables us to draw a more complete picture of emblem production in general, and that of Sambucus' work in particular.⁴

Development of the Plantin Press 1555–1589

Probably in 1549, when Sambucus was a student in Ingolstadt, the Frenchman Christopher Plantin settled in Antwerp to work as a bookbinder and craftsman of gilded leather objects. Later he would say that he had deliberately chosen to live in Antwerp, because of its "convenience for the trade [he] wished to practise."⁵ Plantin must have been about thirty-five, when he became a printer and pub-

³ For the early history of Dutch emblematics and Plantin's role in it, see Karel Porteman, "The Earliest Reception," and his "Miscellanea Emblematica," pp. 175–191. For an analysis and statistics of Plantin's emblem book production see also Stephen Rawles, "The Economics of Emblem Book Production in the Sixteenth Century: Extrapolations from the Records of Christopher Plantin," [paper delivered at the International Conference of Emblem Studies, La Coruña, 2002]. For a somewhat cursory overview of the emblem book production in Antwerp, see Hubert Meeus, "Antwerp as a Centre for the Production of Emblem Books," *Quaerendo*, 30,3 (2000), 228–239.

⁴ For a general history of the Plantin press the standard work is Voet, *The Golden Compasses*, vol. 1: *Christophe Plantin and the Moretuses: Their Lives and their World* and vol. 2: *The Management of a Printing and Publishing House in Renaissance and Baroque*.

⁵ Letter by Plantin to pope Gregory XIII, d.d. 9 October 1574, quoted by Voet, *Golden Compasses*, vol. 1, p. 13.

lisher, in 1555.⁶ In a surprisingly short time he managed to set up one of the largest printing houses of his age. Vital for his success was an international orientation. Originally coming from Tours, he maintained close relations with his French colleagues. Particularly in the first years of his activity, when he had to break even (and pay back the debts), many of his publications were reprint editions of French works. These editions were to an important extent targeted at the French market, but also sold to other French speaking customers throughout Europe, particularly via the international book fair in Frankfurt.

Thanks to this international strategy and Plantin's professional determination the firm could develop into a flourishing business. In 1572, at the peak of his success, Plantin operated 13 presses, a number unequalled in Europe at the time. The production rates were impressive, not only in numbers of copies, but also in different publications. Voet has calculated that Plantin published in total about 2,450 different editions within a period of 34 years, until his death in 1589.⁷

The production of emblem books has always been an eye-catching part of his publishing list. In quantitative terms, however, emblems do not form a vital part of Plantin's list. Voet counts 37 editions of emblem books, which constitute only 1.45% of the total production. How should these editions, of which Sambucus' *Emblemata* is the first original one, be positioned within the list of Plantin's publications? A chronological outline of the development of the firm helps to see the emblem production in the perspective of broader business strategies.

The first period of Plantin's activity (1555–1562) was marked by a steady increase of his publications. He started with a number of commissions for French publishers. By 1562 the Plantin press had positioned itself among the more sizeable printing houses, running four presses.⁸ As was said before, the production consisted of many

⁶ There is no certainty about Plantin's year of birth, see Voet, *Golden Compasses*, vol. 1, pp. 3–7, see for his early years in Antwerp pp. 11–21, and for his start as a publisher, pp. 31–43.

⁷ Voet emphasises that this number can only be an approximation. Leon Voet, "Some considerations on the production of the Plantin Press," in *Liber amicorum Herman Liebaers*, ed. Frans Vanwijngaerden (Brussels, 1984), p. 355.

⁸ Voet, *Golden Compasses*, vol. 1, Appendix 5, p. 437; Karen Lee Bowen, *Christopher Plantin's Books of Hours: Illustration and Production* (Nieuwkoop, 1997), p. 59.

reprint editions of French works. One of these was *Les devises heroïques*, containing the devices of Claude Paradin and Gabriele Simeoni. This was in fact Plantin's first emblem book publication. It was a relatively low-risk enterprise, because the books had already proven their commercial value. Equally safe was the production of religious works, among which eight Bible editions and twenty-one service books.⁹ Apart from these publications, Plantin also secretly published seventeen works for a spiritual sect called the Family of Love.¹⁰ The Familists combined a shared indifference for confessional disputes with a particular concern for eschatology and a neo-stoic approach to practical issues. Apart from forming a spiritualist sect, the Family also constituted a network of social and economic ties.

This secret part of his list has intrigued many modern scholars. Could Plantin's activity for this sect in fact be seen as an indication of his publishing programme? Much research has been done about the connection between Plantin and the Familists.¹¹ The recent trend, however, is to modify the role of the sect in Plantin's business by showing that the supposed financial support for Plantin's business was confined to the cost of publication.¹² This was a quite normal business arrangement between a printer and an author. Furthermore, Plantin's membership of the sect has been questioned.¹³ Since the production of emblems has been repeatedly associated with this mysterious spiritual milieu, I shall discuss this context at greater length below.

⁹ Voet, "The Production," p. 364.

¹⁰ Plantin's relationship with the sect and its leader, Hendrik Niclaes, starts in 1556, when he printed several works for the sect including "the bible of the Family of Love," *Den Spiegel der Gherechticheit* (The Mirror of Righteousness), written by Niclaes. The work was paid for by the sect. According to Voet, these publications suggest that Plantin was financially dependent on the sect for his starting capital and that the secret publications were thus a way of paying back his debts. Voet, "The Production," pp. 363–364, and idem, *Golden Compasses*, vol. 1, p. 24.

¹¹ See Voet, *Golden Compasses*, vol. 1, pp. 21–30; B. Rekers, *Benito Arias Montano (1527–1598)* (London-Leiden, 1972), in particular pp. 70–104 (influential study; rather too liberal in identifying Familists); M.E.H.N. Mout, "The Family of Love (Huis der Liefde) and the Dutch Revolt," in *Britain and the Netherlands* vol. viii. *Church and State since the Reformation. Papers Delivered to the Seventh Anglo-Dutch Historical Conference*, ed. A.C. Duke, C.A. Tamse (The Hague, 1981), pp. 76–93; the standard work on the sect is Alastair Hamilton, *The Family of Love* (Cambridge, 1981), for Plantin's relation to the sect, see in particular pp. 43–48 and pp. 65–70.

¹² Paul Valkema Blouw, "Was Plantin a Member of the Family of Love? Notes on his Dealings with Hendrik Niclaes," *Quaerendo* 23,1 (1993), 12–16.

¹³ Valkema Blouw has pointed out that Plantin's relationship with the Family

Another controversial involvement, however, seriously threatened Plantin's business in this period. In 1562, the year Sambucus fled the religious tensions in Paris after the bloodshed of Protestants by François Duke of Guise at Vassy, Plantin fled to Paris after being accused of publishing a heretic (Calvinist) work. He had to sell his property in Antwerp. The printing business he had established in the previous seven years was apparently shut down in a few months' time. But while in Paris, Plantin had his cause defended successfully by his Antwerp friends. In September 1563 the journal of the firm at Antwerp was opened again.¹⁴

The second phase (1563–1567) of Plantin's business is marked by a flying start. Thanks to a joint venture with four businessmen, called the *Compagnie*, Plantin found the means to make a quick revival. His partners were all related to the rich Calvinist family of the van Bomberghens.¹⁵ The recovery of the business activities is best illustrated by the number of publications in these years. From January 1564 to September 1567 no less than 209 editions appeared from an increasing number of presses. Apart from religious works, Plantin published many books of a humanist nature, such as editions of classical texts, dictionaries and grammars.¹⁶ Whether these types of publications were Plantin's 'vocation', as Voet calls it, or whether the scholarly works filled a gap in the market, or both, is hard to tell. In any case they became one of the most important parts of his publishing list. More and more, Plantin positioned his firm as a publishing house for high-quality scholarly works. It is, as I will argue below, no accident that Plantin's first original emblem publications, that of Sambucus and that of the Dutch humanist Hadrianus Junius, were produced and published in this period (1563–1565). In fact, the production of emblem books peaked during these years. Table one shows that Plantin worked on thirteen editions of various emblem books more or less simultaneously. This means that thousands of copies of emblem books will have been produced in this period.¹⁷

was not one of absolute obedience to its leader (as was formally expected of members) nor one of financial dependence; see esp. pp. 10–11.

¹⁴ Voet, *Golden Compasses*, vol. 1, p. 40.

¹⁵ For the *Compagnie*, see Voet, *Golden Compasses*, vol. 1, pp. 44–49.

¹⁶ Voet, "The Production," p. 365.

¹⁷ The number of copies of each edition varied, as far as is known from the archival material, from 800 to 1,600. A cautious calculation of a total number of copies, based on an average of 1,000 copies per edition, would result in 17,000 copies of emblem books.

The political turmoil of the Dutch revolt put an end to the partnership with the Calvinist van Bomberghens. After the iconoclastic fury of 1566 the three partners fled from the city for fear of reprisals. Consequently a third phase (1568–1576) can be identified in the development of Plantin's business which began with new financial insecurity. Still, it was to be the most successful period of the firm. This was made possible thanks to a shift in Plantin's strategy. In search of new financial backers and at the same time in an attempt to dissociate himself from the Calvinist party, he started to tighten the bonds with influential Spanish acquaintances. After a series of letters to, in particular, Philip II's secretary Gabriel de Çayas and cardinal Granvelle, archbishop of Mechelen and viceroy of Naples, Plantin won Philip's support for the publication of the Polyglot Bible in September 1567. This collaboration with the Spanish Court marked the start of Plantin's friendship with Benito Arias Montano, the Spanish supervisor of the project. However prestigious and important as an instrument of patronage, the *biblia regia* was hardly the sort of project that could bring substantial financial gain.¹⁸ The real profit came from the many projects that followed once the contacts had been established. Towards the end of the 1560s Plantin obtained the publishing rights of several kinds of liturgical works for the Netherlands and, later, also for the big Spanish market. There was a great demand for these works. Following the liturgical decrees of the Council of Trent various Catholic texts (such as the catechism, breviary and missal) were reformed. A papal bull prohibited the use of any other text than those with the pope's approval, thus assuring Plantin of huge sales.¹⁹ This was also safeguarded by the strict regulation regarding licences or privileges. The clerical authorities gave exclusive rights to particular printers for specified areas.

¹⁸ Voet, *Golden Compasses*, vol. 1, p. 74; Kingdon, "The Plantin Breviaries: a case study in the sixteenth century business operations of a publishing house," *Bibliothèque d'humanisme et renaissance*, 22 (1960), p. 138. Ian Maclean argues that prestigious and monumental publications like this one would become increasingly successful, but that the Polyglot was not, because of the Spanish failure to pay the promised subsidy; see "Cardano and his publishers 1534–1663," in *Girolamo Cardano. Philosoph, Naturforscher, Arzt*, ed. Eckhard Keßler (Wolfenbütteler Abhandlungen zur Renaissanceforschung 15) (Wiesbaden, 1994), pp. 333–334.

¹⁹ Robert M. Kingdon, "Patronage, Piety and Printing in Sixteenth-Century Europe," in *A Festschrift for Frederick B. Artz*, ed. David H. Pinkney, Theodore Ropp (Durham, North Carolina, 1964), pp. 31–32.

The expansion of Plantin's publishing house in these years is reflected in the number of presses: in 1567 the firm still ran five presses; by 1569 the number had risen to ten, reaching a peak of thirteen in 1572.²⁰ In order to supply the books demanded by the market, Plantin needed utilise his presses to the maximum capacity. As a consequence, at the beginning of 1572 the production of liturgical books for the Spanish king was practically Plantin's core business.²¹ This shows that Plantin had adapted his publishing policy to the political situation. It also indicates the great commercial importance of printing religious works. It was only thanks to these publications and the support of influential patrons that Plantin could afford to print the scholarly works that brought him so much fame. "Piety and patronage made scholarship possible," as Robert Kingdon put it.²²

The priority of religious publications had its consequences for the production of other books. These projects were often seriously delayed, causing irritation on the part of the authors. "You will soon get [. . .] my description of Hungary, ancient Greece and Italy," Sambucus impatiently wrote to Theodor Zwinger, for instance, in 1571, "which Plantin has—he allows it to be unfairly hidden because of the commencement of his bible and his papist works."²³

The large-scale production of liturgical works puts the decrease in the number of emblem book publications in this period in another perspective. Apart from a new (and highly successful) commentary to Alciato's emblems by Claude Mignault, no new titles were published. The editions that were issued were all reprints of earlier works. There simply seems to have been no time for new, time-consuming emblem projects. Apart from a lack of time, there may also have

²⁰ Voet, *Golden Compasses*, vol. 1, Appendix 5, p. 437.

²¹ *Ibidem*, p. 68.

²² Kingdon, "Piety, Patronage and Printing," p. 36; for a wider discussion and alternative solutions for compensating for the risks involved in publishing scholarly works in the case of the Wechel firm, see Ian Maclean, "L'économie du livre érudit: le cas Wechel (1572–1627)," in *Le livre dans l'Europe de la Renaissance: actes du xxviii^e colloque international d'études humanistes de Tours*, ed. Pierre Aquilon, Henri-Jean Martin, François Dupuigrenet Desrousilles (Paris, 1988), pp. 230–239.

²³ "Ungariam et veterem Graeciam cum Italia a me descriptas brevi cum aliis habebis; quae Plantinus habet, ob biblia sua incohata et papismos latere inique patitur." Letter by Sambucus to Theodor Zwinger about Ortelius' atlas, dated 7 June 1571, Gerstinger, *Die Briefe*, p. 117, no. xlv. It concerns Sambucus' contribution to Ortelius' *Theatrum orbis terrarum*.

been a lack of interest. As a businessman Plantin had obtained his goal of making profit. The capacity of his workshop was used to produce low-risk works for a large market, which was an effective way to regain the investments of the years before. This profitable period, however, did not last long.

In 1576 mutinous Spanish troupes sacked the city of Antwerp. The Spanish Fury, as this event is commonly called, caused considerable damage to Plantin's firm. Moreover, it evoked collaboration between the more moderate provinces in the south and those supporting the revolt. By 1577 Antwerp had chosen to join the revolt. Plantin's career entered yet another phase. Now that the lucrative mass production of liturgical books had decreased, he had to explore new markets. The political situation again asked for a flexible entrepreneurial approach. He chose the side of the rebellion and became the first official printer of the States General (1578). Furthermore, in 1579 he became the official printer of the Antwerp city council.

A few years later, in 1583, he also opened a branch of the firm in Leiden. The recently established university there was quickly developing into an important centre of humanist learning. Indeed, Plantin's star author and personal friend Justus Lipsius had exchanged the university of Louvain for that of Leiden in 1578. The new branch was attractive to both Plantin and the university. The printer profited from the expanding book market, while the young university benefited from his renown as a scholarly printer.

How then did all these changes affect the commercial success of the firm? In numbers of editions, publication figures show an increase compared to the previous period. However, as Voet has noted, for a large part this concerned ordinances, announcements and pamphlets resulting from his work for the Dutch authorities. Still, Plantin appears to have been able to keep his firm running well in turbulent times. He had no trouble in raising considerable sums of money for his business. His backers came from different backgrounds, though none of them was Catholic.²⁴ This financial support also allowed him to publish the path-breaking scholarly works that are now regarded

²⁴ Robert M. Kingdon, "Christopher Plantin and his Backers. A Study in the Problems of Financing Business during War," in *Mélanges d'histoire économique et sociale en hommage au professeur Antony Babel à l'occasion de son soixante-quinzième anniversaire*, vol. 1 (Geneva, 1963), pp. 303–316.

as prime examples of Plantin's importance in this field, such as the herbals by Carolus Clusius, Rembertus Dodonaeus, and Matthias Lobelius.

The production of emblem books was modest in these years. In the period 1578–1580 and in 1582 no editions were issued; until 1585 Plantin only published reprints of various emblem collections. This halt of the emblem book production cannot sufficiently be explained by a lack of money or time. Rather, as will be argued, it seems to have had a more structural cause.

Table 1. *Plantin's Emblem Activities 1555–1589.*

Year/Edition	Sambucus	Junius	Alciato	Paradin-Simeoni
1561				√
1562				√√
1563				
1564	√			
1565		√	√	
1566	√√	√	√	
1567	√	√√	√	√√
1568		√ ²⁵		
1569	√	√		
1570		√		
1571				
1572				
1573			√	
1574			√	
1575		√√√		
1576	√			
1577			√	
1578				
1579				
1580				
1581			√	
1582				
1583				√
1584	√		√	
1585		√		
1586				
1587				
1588				
1589				

²⁵ Voet, *Plantin Press*, no. 1485; no copies known.

In 1585, Plantin returned to Antwerp after the city had surrendered again to the Spanish authorities. His stay in Leiden had not affected the support from his influential Spanish friends de Çayas and Arias Montano. He could continue printing for the government of Antwerp. Quite another problem was the economic chaos caused by the war. Not only had it become difficult to find paper necessary for the production, but also the distribution of the books to his clients in Spain was severely disrupted. His production never reached the level of the 1568–1576 period.

From this short history of the *Officina Plantiniana*, it appears that the emblem book is especially connected to the first ten years of the Plantin press. The type of publication seems to fit in the period of development and strategic investment in high quality books. In later years, most of the emblem editions were reprints. The absence of new emblem books in these years may be seen against the general background of the economic recession at the time. It may also be explained by the commercial viability of the emblem book. Could one conclude from this that Plantin did not consider emblems an appropriate answer to the commercial problems of the time? An answer to this question would require a more detailed investigation of the commercial status of the emblem book. But before this will be presented, another possibility should be considered: Was Plantin perhaps motivated to publish emblem books for ideological reasons, as some modern scholars have argued?

A Conciliatory Atmosphere?

According to J.A. van Dorsten the production of emblem books by Plantin has to be seen within the context of his spiritual beliefs as a member of the Family of Love:

The mass-produced emblem-books of the 1560s, one begins to realize, have their place in the conciliatory context. The great Familist publisher and his collaborators could have devised them only to one end: to teach the readers of their iconoclastic age to view the world wisely and emblematically—as a book of universal Revelation, or as a theatre of Providence, and never as a religio-political battlefield.²⁶

²⁶ J.A. van Dorsten, *The Radical Arts. First Decade of an Elizabethan Renaissance* (Leiden-London, 1970), pp. 55–56.

More recently, this view was endorsed by Ralph Dekoninck in an article on the series of commented biblical prints, the *Imagines et figurae Bibliorum*, published by Plantin in the early 1580s.²⁷ According to Dekoninck, this series has to be placed in an “atmosphère spirituelle qui régnait dans le milieu plantinien et qui imprégna une série d’autres ouvrages illustrés” (112). With these other illustrated works the author refers to the emblem books published in the same period.

Both van Dorsten and Dekoninck consider the emblem books as testimonies of a particular spiritual atmosphere. It seems that van Dorsten carries this view slightly further than Dekoninck, by assuming a conscious strategy behind the publications: van Dorsten considers the plantinian emblem books as instruments to convey a message of religious conciliation. Plantin “and his collaborators” are supposed to be the inventors of this missionary strategy.

Although the publisher’s influence on each of his publications should not be underestimated, this view seems to diminish the contribution of the author. Plantin himself explains his involvement in producing emblem books in more practical terms. In his preface to the French translation of Sambucus’ emblems, he describes his mission as:

l’affection que j’ay de continuer au devoir de mon office, lequel i’estime estre, de m’employer constamment et tant qu’il me sera possible et permis, a imprimer telles oeuvres que les lecteurs puissent avoir proffict ou recreation honeste en les lisant; et moy quelque moyen de pouvoir entretenir ce bon vouloir en les distribuant.²⁸

There are no indications that Plantin selected on the basis of *spiritual* ‘proffict ou recreation’. Moreover, none of the emblem authors can be associated to the doctrine of the Familists. Alciato, Paradin nor Simeoni can be expected to teach the world a lesson in reaction to the recent religious troubles. Their emblems were written in different regions, well before the start of the Dutch Revolt. Even those emblems contemporary with the rise of Familism, the collections of Sambucus

²⁷ Ralph Dekoninck, “Entre Réforme et Contre-Réforme: Les *Imagines et figurae Bibliorum* de Pieter van der Borch et Hendrik Jansen van Barrefelt. Contribution à l’étude du statut et des fonctions de l’image dans les livres édités par Christophe Plantin et François Raphelengien,” *Quaerendo* 29,2 (1999), 96–125, esp. pp. 113–114.

²⁸ Sambucus, *Les emblemes* (Antwerp, 1567); see the facsimile edition by Voet and Persoons, part 2, p. 34.

and Junius, can hardly be considered products of Familist spirituality. From what we have seen of Sambucus' religious identity in the previous chapter, there is no reason to assume that the sect played a special role in Sambucus' life. Junius cannot be located in the milieu of the Family of Love either.²⁹

If not written by Familists, then, could the emblems perhaps have been particularly attractive to them? Did Plantin have a special liking for these books because of his Familist background? In order to answer this question, one should know more about the general character of the emblem books concerned. What constituted the emblematic spirituality? What is it exactly "to view the world wisely and emblematically," as van Dorsten argues? As we shall argue more extensively later, the diversity within both the individual collections and the developing genre makes a concrete and precise answer to this question extremely difficult.³⁰ According to van Dorsten, an emblem book presented "the world as a book of universal Revelation, or as a theatre of Providence." Similarly, Dekoninck states that the prime aim of the emblematic art is to open the "book of the world," consisting of both "le macrocosme physique de la nature" and the "microcosme moral de l'homme" in order to retrieve primordial wisdom.³¹

The problem of this definition is that it is difficult to verify in individual emblems or even in emblem collections. Some collections may have been composed in a climate characterised by this or similar ideological, more or less Neoplatonic frames of reference. However, the emblematic genre in general cannot easily be defined in this way, unless more explicit confirmations are found of the emblem as an instrument in irenistic or conciliatory strategies.³² In fact, such

²⁹ In spite of Porteman's claim that both Sambucus and Junius were members of the Family, there is no evidence for their involvement in the Sect, apart from the fact that they were in contact with the circle around Plantin and Ortelius (Porteman, *Inleiding*, pp. 86–87).

³⁰ See in particular chapters three and seven.

³¹ Dekoninck, "Entre Réforme et Contre-Réforme," p. 114.

³² Compare Dekoninck's conclusion (114): "Étant donné sa vocation universelle, sa quête spirituelle, voire hermétique (sa parole étant celle de la Vérité), et sa capacité à renouer avec une sagesse perdue, on comprend que l'emblème, ou du moins une certaine herméneutique emblématique qui s'appuie sur une solide tradition chrétienne, ait pu apparaître aux yeux de certains membres du cercle plantinien comme l'un des moyens les plus aptes à véhiculer leur message universel de tolérance et de réconciliation entre les peuples et religions, placé sous le signe d'une unique spiritualité, d'une unique foi en Dieu."

examples have not been presented until now, and it would probably be quite problematic to do so. The pretension to offer universal knowledge, for example, cannot be called a general characteristic of the genre. Even if this may sometimes be suggested in prefaces and other paratextual sources, these assertions should not be taken at face-value. It takes more detailed research to determine the precise relation between the claims in prefaces or theorising tracts and the emblematic practice.³³

Furthermore, there are hardly any emblems in collections published by Plantin that respond to the religious problems of the Reformation.³⁴ Unlike the emblems of Théodore de Bèze or Georgette de Montenay, those, for instance, of Alciato, Sambucus and Junius are not explicitly concerned with topical religious developments. Again, in the case of Sambucus we have seen that the theology expressed in a few of his emblems does not involve open comments on the major controversies. Rather, it seems that the tricky subject of religion was best avoided in this particular literary context. Shunning current theological debates is not the same as propagating religious conciliation. In his rules for every-day business life, for example, Plantin prohibited “anyone who wishes to work or daily spend time in our aforesaid printing office to engage in disputation either in opposing or defending any matter concerning religion.”³⁵ This is not the approach of an irenistically motivated publisher, but rather that of a pragmatic businessman.

If the Familist context cannot explain Plantin’s interest in emblems, what else could offer an explanation? Plantin’s letter to the reader provides some interesting indications. He writes here not only about his general motivation as a printer, but also more specifically about the appeal of emblem books:

³³ See chapter three, esp. pp. 104–109; for a case study of the French emblem book production see Alison Saunders, “The Long and the Short of it: Structure and Form in the Early French Emblem Book,” in Scholz, Bath and Weston (eds.), *The European Emblem*, pp. 55–83.

³⁴ See chapter one, pp. 29–32. An example in Sambucus’ collection that does express a general sentiment on the religious situation is his final emblem (without motto) [255], criticising the contemporary disputes. The epigram ends with a plea for unity in the Christian community: “Divisis utinam Dei negociis/Nostro pectore lux beata lites/Iam tandem dirimat locetque ovili/Uno, mox precibus Deo et red-ucat.” (May God’s blissful light in our heart end the troubles; may it now finally settle our disputes, place us in one sheepfold and soon lead us back with prayers to God.)

³⁵ Voet, *Golden Compasses*, vol. 2, p. 358.

Or ie tiens ceste maniere ici d'escrire Emblemes, ne devoir estre mise au dernier reng de telles oeuvres: d'autant que, pour les belles et graves sentences morales dont elle consiste, la lecture n'en peut estre si non utile et puis apres delectable pour les figures representantes a l'oeil curieux la substance de chacune d'icelles.

In a further argument the commercial undertone is clearly discernible: apart from the sacred texts, Plantin claims, there are hardly any other books that are useful for so many different readers. What follows is a detailed enumeration of all the possible groups of buyers, from all sorts of craftsmen to the intellectual and the “vulgaire ignorant.”³⁶ Neither Plantin’s motivation as a printer nor his view on the emblem, written with “mercantile power of persuasion” (as Porteman put it) bears a trace of a particular spiritual atmosphere.³⁷

Moreover, it should be remembered that Plantin did not initiate each of the emblem publications himself. In the cases of Sambucus and Junius he had to co-operate with authors who had already well developed plans. The way in which the collaboration was organised varied from project to project. Clearly factors like the geographical distance between author and publisher, the possible differences in social milieus, and, of course, personal chemistry must have determined the relation between the two parties to an important extent.

Relation Between Author and Publisher

In the case of Sambucus’ emblems, the author had been the initial co-ordinator of the production, by approaching both the illustrator and the printer (initially, as was said before, this was probably meant to be Libertus Malcotius) during his stay in the Low Countries in the course of 1563. As soon as Plantin entered the stage, co-ordinating the production of the *Emblemata* became a joint operation. Firstly, Plantin took over the practical organisation.³⁸ From now on,

³⁶ Sambucus, *Les emblemes* (Antwerp, 1567); see the facsimile edition by Voet and Persoons, part 2, p. 34.

³⁷ Porteman, “The Earliest Reception,” pp. 38–39; *idem*, “Miscellanea emblematica,” pp. 189–190: “Hij [the text] is duidelijk het werk van een handelaar die het nut van zijn koopwaar vanuit alle hoeken wenst te belichten en aan te prijzen,” (189).

³⁸ The remarks by Voet that Sambucus had hampered Plantin in his eagerness to help the publisher, seem to ignore Sambucus’ letter to Ortelius and the fact that

he became the man who made the decisions about illustrations, print run and lay-out. This had its effect on practical arrangements, since for unclear reasons he rejected almost half the number of drawings made by d'Heere. Subsequently, Plantin commissioned the artists Geoffroy Ballain and Pieter Huys to take care of drawing new ones.³⁹ At the time, Sambucus was still staying in Gent, the city where d'Heere had been working on his designs. He had left, however, by the time the printing privilege was issued, on 17 January 1564.⁴⁰ Sambucus' prime role as author of the textual parts of the emblems had evidently been accomplished, since the censors only granted such a licence on the basis of a full text.⁴¹ The fact that the privilege is granted to Plantin, not to Sambucus, indicates that he is now in command of the project: he will own the rights for printing and reprinting, not Sambucus.

This also meant that Plantin controlled the production of the Dutch and French translations of the *Emblemata* quite independently from the author. He commissioned Marcus Antonius Gillis van Diest for the Dutch translation and Jacques Grévin for the French one, both of which would be published two years later. As both Alison Adams and Karel Porteman have shown these editions were not literal translations, but adaptations, which were meant to cater for new groups of buyers.⁴²

In improving the collection of Latin emblems, Plantin also had the final say. This becomes clear in a letter from 1581, where Sambucus tried to induce Plantin to include new illustrations to the section of ancient coins:

Plantin had just come back from Paris (edition by Voet-Persoons, p. 10). As Voet himself notes (*Golden Compasses*, vol. 2, p. 283), information about the initial stage of a publication ("whether the publisher or the author takes the initiative [...]") is an important indication of the financial relationship between them.

³⁹ This job marked the start of a long and lasting collaboration between Plantin and both Ballain and Huys; see the list of graphic artists working for the Plantin press in Voet, *Golden Compasses*, vol 2, p. 233.

⁴⁰ The original document, written in Dutch, is preserved in the archive of the Plantin-Moretus Museum, 1179, no. 22. The year given on the document is 1563, using the Easter calendar. Plantin could submit a request for a privilege to two different official bodies, the Council of Brabant or the Privy Council in Brussels. This one is issued by the Privy Council. See Voet, *Golden Compasses*, vol. 2, p. 262. A Latin summary of it is printed in the various editions concerned. The accounts give also the payment of the privilege, d.d. 18 March, 1564. Museum Plantin Moretus, Arch. 3, fol. 8b, see also Voet, *Golden Compasses*, vol. 2, p. 271, n. 3.

⁴¹ See Voet, *Golden Compasses*, vol. 2, pp. 270–271.

⁴² Alison Adams, "Jacques Grévin and his Translation of Sambucus' *Emblemata*,"

Numismatum antiquorum et aereorum omnium aversas partes remisit cum augmento; addo has quoque raras, quas nuper adeptus sum. Oro, ne pereant, et vel addes Emblematis continuo aut salva et integra remittes. Verum scio Emblemata fore Italis et Gallis longe cariora horum appendice.

(I have returned the reverses of the ancient copper coins to you, together with an addition; I also add these rare ones that I purchased recently. Please do not let them get lost; either include them in the Emblems immediately, or please send them back safe and sound. But I know that with this addition the emblems will be much more appreciated by the Italians and the French.)⁴³

Clearly, Sambucus was not in a position to force Plantin to add the new coins to his book. The commercial argument to persuade Plantin is indicative of the sense of priority the author assumes on the part of the publisher. In fact, the additional section would never be added to the collection. In 1583 Plantin apologised for the delay in producing the additional woodcuts, blaming it on a harsh economic climate and a lack of woodcutters.⁴⁴

The relation between Plantin and Junius was a different one, although here again Plantin seems to have held a similar command over the production of the book. The plans for publishing Junius' emblems were conceived during the months Sambucus' emblems were in print.⁴⁵ From the Plantin archives it becomes clear that the work on the illustrations for these new emblems started before Sambucus' collection was even printed. The first mention of Junius' emblems dates from June 1564 when Geoffroy Ballain was paid for the design of the illustrations. Thus, Plantin could already envision a series of new emblem books in 1564.

Sambucus was in fact a key figure in this project as well. In several undated letters, presumably written in the second half of 1563, Junius wrote to his Hungarian colleague about his emblems and a possible publication by Plantin. Together with the first one he sent

De Gulden Passer 75 (1997), 139–182; Porteman, “The Earliest Reception,” pp. 36–40 and “Miscellanea Emblematica,” pp. 180–190.

⁴³ Letter by Sambucus to Plantin, Vienna, d.d. 26 August 1581; Gerstinger, *Die Briefe*, p. 262.

⁴⁴ Letter by Plantin to Sambucus, Leiden, d.d. 18 May, 1583, see M. van Durme (ed.), *Supplément à la correspondance de Christophe Plantin* (Antwerp, 1955), pp. 203–204, no. 178; see also Gerstinger, “Ein gelehrter Briefwechsel,” pp. 13–14.

⁴⁵ See Chris L. Heesakkers, “Hadriani Junii Medici Emblemata (1565),” in Enenkel-Visser (eds.), *Mundus Emblematicus*, pp. 41–43.

Sambucus several specimens “as a small present,” hoping to elicit his opinion; later he sent Sambucus the rest of the corpus, in total a number of fifty.⁴⁶ From the later letter it can be inferred that Sambucus more or less brought Junius and Plantin together by recommending the Antwerp printer for the publication of this particular booklet:

Plantini fidem, diligentiam et in deferendo mihi omni officio studium magnopere praedicas et id obviis ulnis ut defertur, amplector: certo typi placuerunt olim impense et quod ad Emblematum editionem atinet, moram praecipitari velim.⁴⁷

(You speak highly of Plantin’s honesty, diligence and his zeal for being of help to me with any service, and I welcome with open arms the help in this case. Surely, former works [of him] pleased me tremendously, and concerning the edition of the emblems I would like to make haste.)

In this case Plantin had a leading role in practical matters right from the start. Although the author was actively involved in the publication process, for instance by submitting detailed suggestions for the illustrations, which would be included in the printed edition as a

⁴⁶ For the first letter, see *Hadriani Junii epistolae, quibus accedit eiusdem vita & oratio de atrium liberalium dignitate* [. . .] (Dordrecht, 1652), p. 403, dealt with in detail by Heesakkers, “Hadriani Junii Emblemata,” pp. 42–43; for the letter offering the complete set of emblems, see P. Scheltema (ed.), *Hadriani Junii epistolae selectae nunc primum editae* (Amsterdam, 1839), pp. 65–66, Junius to Sambucus, n.d.: “Nunc reliqua ad te Emblemata in universum numero quinquagena mitto, de quibus statue quod lubet, sive ea publicum tentare velis, sive mari flammisque aboleri jubeas, susque deque ferendum putabo [. . .]” (I send you now the rest of the emblems, in total a number of fifty; give your opinion about them as you please, whether you wish the public to try them out, or you desire them to be destroyed by sea and flames, I shall bear it with indifference [. . .]). Apparently, there were communication problems between the two: several letters refer to sending emblems. This letter must date from some time after 20 December [1563], according to the opening reference: “Literas tuas, vir doctiss. Vicesimo Decembris scriptas, sub atrocissimum istud gelu accipi in quibus video mentionem fieri epistolae a me non visae, qua scribis certiore me reddidisse te de acceptis Emblematis, ea haud dubie naufragium passa videtur.” (I have received your letter of 20 December, most learned Sir, in the time of that extremely harsh frost. In it, you mention a letter I have not seen, in which you had given certainty about the receipt of the emblems. It seems beyond doubt that they have gone lost.) Scheltema erroneously considers this letter as earlier than the one on pp. 67–68, which also deals with sending a number of emblems. This particular letter, however, reacts to a letter written by Sambucus in November 1563. In this letter Junius promises to visit Sambucus (and Plantin) in January. The visit probably never took place.

⁴⁷ Junius to Sambucus, n.d. [December 1563–January 1564], Scheltema, *Hadriani Junii epistolae*, 65.

commentary, it was again Plantin who made the practical decisions. Plantin decided for example that Gillis van Diest should make the Dutch translation, instead of Dirk Volkertzoon Coornhert, who had been recommended by Junius as “an outstanding writer” to do the epigrams. Junius had suggested Coornhert, who also lived in Haarlem, so that he would be able to collaborate with him and keep an eye on the translation.⁴⁸ Furthermore, Plantin had the designs for the illustrations (this time by Ballain) partly redrawn by Pieter Huys, just like he had in the case of Sambucus’ *Emblemata*.⁴⁹ Perhaps this division of tasks was only logical in view of the geographical distance between the author in Haarlem and the publisher in Antwerp. In the preface, at least, Junius mentions this practical aspect as one of the reasons why he had written a list of suggestions for the illustrator.

Consequently, whereas the author determined the content of the epigrams, it was the publisher’s prerogative to organise the material according to his ideas. It seems that this is not exceptional in sixteenth-century book industry, where the author had often little command over his manuscript once he had handed it over to a publisher.⁵⁰

Plantin’s Influence on the Appearance of the Books

The presentation of the emblem book provides valuable information about Plantin’s marketing strategy. The translations of Junius’ and Sambucus’ emblems are presented in a way which is markedly different from the Latin editions. Both the Dutch and the French translation of Sambucus’ emblems, for instance, lack the preface ‘de Emblemata’. It has been assumed that the treatise was left out because it was untranslatable.⁵¹ As we shall see more extensively in the next

⁴⁸ Letter of Junius to Plantin, n.d. [1565]; Rooses and Denucé, *Correspondance de Christophe Plantin*, vol. III, pp. 6–8, no. 335; see also Voet, no. 1482. Coornhert would publish his *Recht ghebryck ende misbryck, van tydlycke have* [...] with Plantin in 1585, an adaptation of which by B.G. Furmerius *De rerum usu ac abusu*, was published ten years before, by Plantin in 1575.

⁴⁹ Voet, *Golden Compasses*, vol. 2, p. 198.

⁵⁰ For an interesting case in this respect, see Michiel van Groesen, “Boissard, Clusius and the Making of *Antiquitates Romanae*, 1597–1602,” *Lias*, 29 (2002), 195–213, esp. pp. 199–201; compare the much more positive view set out by Brian Richardson, *Printing, Writers and Readers in Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 58–76 and pp. 80–104.

⁵¹ Homann, *Studien*, 44.

chapter, this treatise was indeed written in a learned style, full of rhetorical phraseology and expressions in Greek. In the Dutch edition the text is replaced by Gillis' introduction, a poem by the same person to Ortelius, and a dedication by Gillis to Hendrik van Berchem. In the French edition, as was said earlier, Plantin published his own letter to the reader. The specification of the possible readers in this letter provides us with another explanation for the absence of Sambucus' preface. The craftsmen and artists Plantin mentions are not the humanist readers Sambucus addressed in his text. Plantin had probably thought this learned preface to be less attractive for a vernacular readership. Other particular humanist features were left out as well, notably the section with ancient coins, dedicated to Jean Grolier. This section was apparently not seen as interesting for the non-Latin speaking readership. The expenses for printing it could thus best be saved. Finally, the portrait of Sambucus, a typical expression of the humanist awareness of being part of a learned community, was also omitted. This implies that the humanist character of the work was again reduced. Plantin was careful to present this edition as attractive to both the learned world and the man in the street.

Not only the contents but also the lay-out of the book was an important concern for the publisher. The appearance of a book influenced the buyers and also determined the image of the publishing firm. In his emblematic publications he used the same font and the same format for Sambucus', Junius' and Alciato's emblems. The texts of the emblems in the Latin and French editions were printed in italic.⁵² The Dutch translations of Sambucus' and Junius' emblems are set in a gothic letter (the *flamande* or *Nederduits*), except for the dedicatory letters by Plantin and Gillis. Plantin did not have a free hand, however, in matters of book design. There were important conventions to observe. His use of italic, for example, is consistent with the practice in other publications.⁵³

The format of the books also helps in determining the target market Plantin had in mind. The first editions of the collections of Sambucus and Junius were printed in octavo, which provided more space for luxurious decoration, for example in the form of woodcut

⁵² There is no trace of the relegation of italics, as sketched by Voet, *Golden Compasses*, vol. 2, p. 159.

⁵³ Voet, *Golden Compasses*, vol. 2, pp. 157–158.

borders. Reprint editions were mostly published in seidecimo. As was said earlier, the price for these books could be marked down, which made them available to a larger audience. It was also a practical size for travelling customers. Frequently the print run of these smaller sized editions was bigger, which indicates that the books were easier to sell.⁵⁴

The change in format also had its effect on the contents of the books. In the smaller format the emblems could not always be printed on one page, as was customary in the octavo editions. Consequently, in the seidecimo books a new emblem immediately follows the last bit of text of the previous emblem. Moreover, the size of the book affected the order of the emblems. In the smaller editions Plantin adapted the traditional order in those places where the page can be filled more economically. Whereas, for example, in the first edition the emblem ‘Memor utriusque fortunae’ (Mindful of both good and bad fortune [here p. 13]) is followed by ‘Conscientia integra. Laurus’ (An upright conscience. The laurel [here p. 14]), a different sequence is seen in the 1569 edition. Here, the text of ‘Memor utriusque fortunae’ (p. 9) continues on the next page (p. 10), leaving just enough space for the emblem ‘In copia minor error’. This emblem turns out to be the nearest available short emblem fitting in this space.

The publisher’s influence on the order of the emblems betrays an interesting negligence for this aspect of the composition. It may offer too little evidence for explicit statements on the early modern reader’s sense of unity in emblem books, but at least it calls for caution in investigating the overall structure of emblem collections.

Another of the publisher’s tasks was the distribution of the books. Plantin printed for an international market. This implied that he had to organise the transport of the copies practically all over Europe. The central market for the international book trade was the Frankfurt book fair. This fair was organised twice a year, and determined the publisher’s agenda. This sometimes caused tensions in the contact between author and publisher, as appears from a remark by Sambucus in his preface to the edition of Janus Pannonius’ epigrams:

⁵⁴ On the relation between format and salability, see for instance Plantin’s letter to Joannes Sepulveda, d.d. 8 September, [1567], Rooses and Denucé, *Correspondance de Christophe Plantin*, vol. I, pp. 179–180, no. 82; for a concise general account of the development of formats, see also Richardson, *Printing, Writers and Readers*, pp. 125–129.

Sed omnia nunc ex quarta Decade Bonfinii a me nuper laboriose quidem ad editionem comparati, sed negligentia et quaestuosa festinatione impressorum ad mercatum Francfurtensem depravatissime eiecti, uberius poterunt repeti.⁵⁵

(In fact I had just painstakingly prepared the fourth decade of Bonfinius for publication, but it has been spat out in the most perverted of ways, because of the printers' negligence and their hasty chase after gain at the Frankfurt book fair. But now everything can be repeated more fully.)

The logistics of the book trade can occasionally cause changes in the year of publication. The French edition of Sambucus' emblems, for instance, gives 1567, although it had already come from the press in 1566, together with the Dutch translation. Still, the *Emblesmes* were dated 1567, unlike the Dutch edition, which had 1566 on its title page. As Voet suggested, this edition was probably post-dated in order to compensate for the time it took for this export product to be distributed.⁵⁶

Plantin's decisions in producing the emblems can thus be seen as indexes to his commercial motives. But what precisely was the commercial value that emblem books represented?

Best-Sellers?

Calculating profits is an extremely knotty issue for many practical and principal reasons.⁵⁷ Evidently, a publisher had to fix a reasonable profit margin on his publications without making them too expensive. This made the printing of richly illustrated books a precarious undertaking. As was said before, the expenses for producing illustrations were high: designers and woodcutters had to be commissioned for the illustrations, additional material was necessary. How, one might ask, did Plantin manage to produce the editions? In the period of his first emblematic publications he did not have many financial resources. Why did he take the trouble of investing time and money in these books?

⁵⁵ Sambucus' edition of Janus Pannonius, *Opera* (Vienna: C. Stainhofer, 1569), fol. (:)iiii^o.

⁵⁶ Voet-Persoons, "De emblemata van Joannes Sambucus," p. 12.

⁵⁷ See Maclean, "L'économie du livre érudit," p. 234.

An obvious incentive was the commercial potential of the emblem book. Plantin probably expected a promising market for these works. Illustrated books in general exerted a great appeal, and the emblem book in particular had recently gained popularity in Italy and France.⁵⁸ The Northern-European market for these books was yet to be developed.⁵⁹ Plantin was acquainted with the situation in France through his many personal contacts. For an ambitious entrepreneur the emblem book must, therefore, have been an attractive opportunity. Yet, were emblem books in the end really the best-sellers modern research so often claims them to be?

Table 2. *Costs and Profit Margins.*⁶⁰

Edition	Voet	Version	Format	Print run	Costs ⁶¹	Selling price ⁶²	Profit (%) ⁶³
Paradin 1561	1949	French	16			5 ⁶⁴	
Paradin 1562-a	1950	French	16				
Paradin 1562-b	1952	Latin	16			4	
Paradin 1567-a	1953	Latin	16	1,600	79,15 (0,99)	2½	60
Paradin 1567-b	1951	French	16	1,600	73,50 (0,92)	2½ ⁶⁵	63
Paradin 1583	1954	Latin	16			3½	
Sambucus 1564	2168	Latin	8	1,250	372,35 (5,96)	7	15 ⁶⁶
Sambucus 1566-a	2169	Latin	8	800	129,40 (3,24)	7	54

⁵⁸ Of the sixteenth-century emblem books in Hilary M.J. Sayles' chronological list, incorporated in part two of Praz' *Studies in Seventeenth-Century Imagery* (Rome, 1974), pp. 52–54, only very few are published outside the region of southern Europe (mainly France and the Italian cities). The only notable exceptions are the 1531 Augsburg edition of Alciato's emblems, and the 1556 Basle edition of Valeriano's *Hieroglyphica*.

⁵⁹ The first emblem book printed in the Low Countries is Guillaume de La Perrière, *Tpalays der gheleerder ingienen oft der constiger gheesten* (Antwerp: widow of J. van Liesveldt, 1554); see Porteman, "The Earliest Reception," pp. 33–36.

⁶⁰ I thank Stephen Rawles, who allowed me to compare my initial data and calculations with his findings as presented at the International Conference of the Society for Emblem Studies in La Coruña, 2002. Unless indicated otherwise, all data in this table are taken from from Voet's bibliography and Max Rooses, "De Plantijnsche uitgaven van 'Emblemata Joannis Sambuci'," *Het Boek. Tijdschrift voor Boek- en Bibliotheekwezen*, 1 (1903), pp. 3–15.

⁶¹ The first amount gives the total costs in florins, the costs in *stuivers* (1 florin consists of 20 *stuivers*) per copy are indicated between brackets. It can only be an approximation, and certainly an optimistic one, since important overhead costs are not included. For further nuances on this notion, see Voet, *Golden Compasses*, vol. 2, p. 388.

⁶² The selling price is given in *stuivers*.

⁶³ The profit margin indicates the percentage of the selling price that can be seen as profit; see the restrictions of the cost accounting in note no. 43.

⁶⁴ *Journal 1561–1574*, MPM Arch. 36, 2 accounts on fol. 4ro (April 1561).

⁶⁵ Data taken from MPM Arch. 45, for example on fols. 20vo and 205vo.

⁶⁶ This profit margin neglects the fact that Sambucus probably paid some of the

Table 2 (cont.)

Edition	Voet	Version	Format	Print run	Costs	Selling price	Profit (%)
Sambucus 1566-b	2173	Dutch	16	1,000	66,10 (1,32)	3	56
Sambucus 1567	2174	French	16	1,000	92,23 (1,84)	3	39
Sambucus 1569	2170	Latin	16	1,525		3½	54
Sambucus 1576	2171	Latin	16			4 ⁶⁷	
Sambucus 1584	2172	Latin	16			4	
Sambucus 1599 ⁶⁸	—	Latin	16			4	
Junius 1565	1476	Latin	8	1,250	130,40 (2,09)	4	48
Junius 1566	1478	Latin	8	850	29,85 (0,70)	3½ ⁶⁹	80
Junius 1567-a	1482	Dutch	16			½	
Junius 1567-b	1484	French	16	1,000	18,80 (0,38)	½	24
Junius 1569	1479	Latin	16			½ ⁷⁰	
Junius 1570	1486	French	16			½ ⁷¹	
Junius 1575-a	1480	Latin	16			1½ ⁷²	
Junius 1575-b	1487	French	16				
Junius 1575-c	1483	Dutch	16				
Junius 1585	1481	Latin	16			1½ ⁷³	
Alciato 1565	22	Stockhamer	16	1,250	90,93 (1,45)		
Alciato 1566	23	Stockhamer	16	1,000 ⁷⁴		2½	
Alciato 1567	24	Stockhamer	16	1,000	22,70 (0,45)	1½	64
Alciato 1573-74 ⁷⁵	25-6	Mignault	16			4	
Alciato 1577	27	Mignault	8			10	
Alciato 1581	29	Mignault	8			12	
Alciato 1584	32	Mignault	16			5	

illustration costs, as suggested by Ortelius, quoted above. Depending on what costs Sambucus paid exactly, which is not clear from the account books, the margin would increase. For example, if Sambucus paid the costs of the designs he had commissioned to Lucas d'Heere (70,10 fl.), the total costs for Plantin would become 302,25 (4,84 st. per copy). The profit margin would then be 31%.

⁶⁷ *Index Librorum qui ex typographia Plantiniana prodierunt* (Antwerp: Officina Plantiniana, 1596) (sig. MPM R55.21), fol. A4ro.

⁶⁸ Published by Franciscus Raphelengius.

⁶⁹ See the selling accounts in the *Journal* (1566), MPM Arch. 44, for example on fols. 45vo, 46vo, 105ro.

⁷⁰ See *Le livre du comptant de jan. 1569*, MPM Arch. 43-III, for example on fols. 7vo, 14ro.

⁷¹ See the previously mentioned 1596 catalogue [MPM R55.21], fol. 9ro (sig. A4ro).

⁷² This seems to have been the price in the first months after the book was published, see *Livres du comptant 1575*, MPM Arch. 53, for example on fols. 75ro, 107vo, 133vo and 175ro. Later the book is sold for 1 *stuiver*, see for instance *ibidem* fols. 189ro and 205vo. Depending on the demand and the number of copies, Plantin sometimes gave a discount to booksellers; usually this discount price, however, became the regular price when demand had slackened off; see Voet, *Golden Compasses*, vol. 2, pp. 440-441.

⁷³ See again the 1596 catalogue, fol. 9ro (sig. A4ro).

⁷⁴ In contrast to Voet's remarks, the book is described in the *Grand livre des affaires*, MPM Arch. 4, fol. 100vo. The entry is dated 8 September [1566].

⁷⁵ The imprint 1574 (Voet, no. 26) concerns a new title edition, with the date changed by hand.

The most likely candidates for a best-seller status are the two reprint editions in this list. The first one, published in 1561, was a joint reprint of two separate Lyons editions: Claude Paradin's *Devises Heroïques* originally published by Jean de Tournes and Guillaume Gazeau in 1551 and Gabriele Simeoni's *Les devises ou emblemes heroïques et morales* published by Guillaume Rouille in 1559.⁷⁶ After the success of the French editions Plantin could safely expect a market for his edition. As was said before, in this period Plantin's firm was still developing its position in the publishing sector. There was as yet no question of specialisation in his list. In this context, this particular publication was a fairly reasonable choice. It enabled him to optimise his profits and to compete with his French colleagues, the edition being destined primarily for the French market. Eight hundred copies of the work were shipped to Paris on 7 April 1561.⁷⁷ Moreover, by copying the Lyons models Plantin saved considerable expenses. It seems to have been successful, because already in the following year another edition was issued.

Aiming at a broader, international outlet, Plantin had the text translated into Latin by Joannes Gubernator. It was an efficient way of using the market potential of the book. It was also relatively cheap, because he could use the woodblocks without extra costs. This edition was printed during Plantin's absence in 1562. He was eventually dissatisfied with the result. In the meantime, Plantin's colleagues in Antwerp eagerly pirated the work and four more editions in French and Dutch were issued.⁷⁸ Apparently, Plantin had introduced a commercial attraction to the Netherlandish publishing market.

Plantin's discontent with the Latin text was not an obstacle to reprint the edition with only minor changes in 1567. This edition was printed in 1,600 copies, which is more than is known of any other emblem book published by him.⁷⁹ The profit margin of this edition appears to be a comfortable 64%. Compared to the other emblem editions of which a profit margin can be estimated, this is

⁷⁶ Praz, *Studies*, pp. 444–445 (Paradin); p. 497 (Simeoni). About reprints in the Low Countries of Paradin, see Porteman, "The earliest reception," pp. 40–41.

⁷⁷ Voet, no. 1949 (*Arch.* 36, fol. 3ro).

⁷⁸ Porteman, "The earliest reception," p. 41.

⁷⁹ On average the print runs of the Plantin press in this period ranged from 1,000 to 1,500 copies per edition. For scholarly works a number of 800 figures regularly. See Voet, *Golden Compasses*, vol. 2, pp. 169–173.

relatively high (see table two). Generally, Plantin's policy was to make the selling price of his publications about twice as much as the cost price.⁸⁰ In some instances the margin was larger, particularly in the case of books that were expensive to make and difficult to sell.

Assuming that Plantin sold out one of these Paradin editions completely, what would be his profit? The result of this at first glance respectable profit margin would be rather disappointing. Based on the number of 1,600 copies, the Latin 1567 edition would have earned Plantin 128 florins and the French one 126 florins. Plantin, however, most probably never saw these considerable sums of money. In the first place the money only came in at a slow pace: the books often had to be kept in stock for many years. The emblem books of Junius and Sambucus, for example, were still in stock in 1619. In a letter dating from this time, Plantin's grandson Francis Raphelengius junior asks his cousin, another of Plantin's grandchildren, Balthasar Moretus senior, to delay reprinting these emblem books until he has sold his stock.⁸¹ Secondly, many costs not strictly belonging to these editions (housing, distribution, some of the wages) are not taken into account. Apart from this, the investment in new illustrated publications exceeded the profit of the existing editions by far. For example, the complete sell-out of both 1567 editions would not have been enough to pay the bills for the production of Sambucus' emblems, amounting to over 370 florins.⁸² In short, the sales of copies of Paradin and Simeoni could not possibly have turned Plantin into a rich man.

The other re-edition of an emblem book issued by Plantin concerned the emblems by Andrea Alciato. The Alciato editions are specimens of the same publishing policy as that of the Paradin-

⁸⁰ Based on the costs calculated by Plantin in his accounts. As was said before, these did not include overhead expenses that amounted to 20–25% of the total costs. See Voet, *Golden Compasses*, vol. 1, pp. 390–391.

⁸¹ Letter from Francis Raphelengius junior to Balthasar Moretus senior, Leiden, d.d. 25 January, 1619: "Met Vegetius, Symbola Heroica, Emblemata Junii et Sambuci sal u.l. dat faveur doen van niet te herdrucken voor de onse mogen verkocht zijn; 't welk niet lang aenloopen kan; als ook Emblemata Alciati 8^o." (Would you be so kind as not to reprint Vegetius, [Paradin's] *Symbola Heroica*, and the *Emblemata* of Junius and Sambucus before our copies have been sold, which should not take long, and similarly for the *Emblemata* of Alciato in octavo.) Archives of the Plantin Moretus Museum, 92, fol. 189ro. I thank P.G. Hofwijzer for this reference; Hofwijzer and C.L. Heesakkers are preparing an edition of the correspondence of Raphelengius.

⁸² See edition Voet-Persoons, part 1, p. 12.

Simeoni editions. In 1565 Plantin had published the first edition of Alciato's emblems, a reprint of an edition of Jean de Tournes with a commentary by Sebastian Stockhamer, first published in Lyons in early sixties.⁸³ In the next twenty years or so Plantin published a total of eight Alciato-editions. These were not all modelled on the work of Jean de Tournes. Plantin published a revised edition in 1573 with a commentary by Claude Mignault.⁸⁴ There was indeed a good market for this book. Until then not a single edition of Alciato's emblems had been published in the region, in spite of the great appeal that other editions had on the audience.⁸⁵ Of the first three editions the number of copies is known. The profit margin can be calculated for only one edition. Combined with the low selling price of these works, however, it can again be estimated that these editions did not provide Plantin with considerable financial means. The books were popular and reasonably successful, but did not bring extraordinary profits.

While reprint editions may have involved relatively few risks for the publisher, new emblem books were a different matter. In these cases the publisher was less certain of a positive reception of the particular book. The production costs were higher while at the same time the selling price could not be set accordingly. Consequently, the profit margin was small. Plantin nevertheless published the emblems of Sambucus and Junius with great care. Bearing the financial returns of the Paradin-Simeoni editions in mind, what could have been the attraction of these more difficult projects? Could Plantin afford to produce these publications?

One thing, the authors of Plantin's emblem books were not paid for their manuscripts. Although not a common action, Plantin did

⁸³ Voet supposes that it must have been an edition published by de Tournes in 1563 or 1564, based on the date of the foreword by Stockhamer (1 March 1563). There is no such edition to be found, however, in Green's standard (albeit incomplete) bibliography on Alciato's emblems. The latest de Tournes edition mentioned by Green is that of 1561; see Henry Green, *Andrea Alciati and his Books of Emblems. A Biographical and Bibliographical Study* (London, 1872), p. 184, no. 67.

⁸⁴ Voet, *Plantin Press* no. 25. The first edition of Alciato's emblems with Mignault's commentary had appeared two years before: *Emblemata cum luculenta, et facili enarratione, qua cuiusque emblematis origo, mensque autoris explicatur: & obscura vel dubia illustrantur per Claudium Minoem Divisionem* (Paris: D. du Pré, 1571); see Adams, Rawles and Saunders (eds.), *A Bibliography of French Emblem Books* no. F.049.

⁸⁵ The lion's share of the editions from 1531 to 1565 were published in France (in particular in Paris and Lyons). See Green, *Andrea Alciati*, pp. 103–187.

sometimes compensate authors for what he considered to be commercially attractive projects. Thus, Junius received “3 nights lodging, 4 meals and 6 Flemish ells of velvet” for his polyglot dictionary *Nomenclator* in 1567. In 1581 he gave to Ludovico Guicciardini fifty copies and over 81 *florins* worth of other books for the new edition of his *Descrittione di tutti I Paesi Bassi*. Significantly, Sambucus’ request for an enlarged edition of his *Emblemata* came in the same year, but was declined by Plantin for financial reasons.⁸⁶ This was all rather exceptional, however, and in most cases the author had to either pay himself or address a third party to finance the production. In the 1570s, for instance, Sambucus in vain tried to sell his edition of Dioscorides’ pharmacological manual *De material medica* for 500 florins to the Strasburg printer Josias Rihel. When the latter refused to pay, Sambucus asked the physician Theodor Zwinger, who also worked as corrector in the firms of Episcopius and Oporinus, to help him find “a patron and a suitable printer for the project.”⁸⁷ In another, quite practical letter to his cousin, Abraham Ortelius explains something of the financial etiquette involved in the relation between author and publisher. Answering a question whether it was appropriate to ask a fee for his manuscript, Ortelius remarks:

My dunckt so veele als ick in onsen tyt bevonden hebbe, so hebben de aucteuren seldom gelt van haer boeken. want meest wordense den druckeren gesconcken, dan sy hebben wel gemeynlycken wat exemplaren also gedruickt syn. Ende dan oock wachdense gemeynlycken wat vande dedicatie, idque pro moecenatis aut patroni liberalitate, die dicwil ende oock meest (geloove ick) hem mist.

(As far as my experience goes, authors have seldom obtained money for their books, as these are mostly presented to the printers, but they usually receive a few printed copies, and generally expect also to get something for their dedication, according to the liberality of their patron, which often or mostly (I believe) fails them.)⁸⁸

The emblem books of Junius and Sambucus seem to have been no exception to this practice. Sambucus, for instance, paid the costs of

⁸⁶ Voet, *Golden Compasses*, vol. 2, pp. 286–290; for more examples over a broader time span, see Richardson, *Printing, Writers and Readers*, pp. 58–69.

⁸⁷ Gerstinger, *Die Briefe*, pp. 116–118, no. xlv.

⁸⁸ Abraham Ortelius to Emanuel van Meteren, 17 November 1586, translated by J.H. Hessels; see Hessels (ed.), *Abraham Ortelii Epistolae* (Ecclesiae Londino-Batavae Archivum, 1) (Cambridge, 1887), no. 148, pp. 341–343.

the illustrations, as can be gathered from the same letter.⁸⁹ Apparently, Plantin did not expect these books to be of the same commercial importance as the examples mentioned above. Clearly, the financial contribution of the author reduced the commercial risk considerably, without affecting Plantin's control on the book. Sambucus does not seem to have expected much more, as can be concluded from a similar procedure followed in the case of his *Icones* (1574). Initially, Sambucus had commissioned Antonio Abondio, one of the emperor's court artists, to produce the portraits, and he had offered the manuscript to the Basle publisher Theodor Zwinger.⁹⁰ When Abondio, however, failed to deliver, he had the book published by Plantin, but the costs for the production of the illustrations remained his responsibility.⁹¹

Like the illustrations in the reprints the woodblocks of the new editions could be re-used without extra costs. This may explain, for instance, why Plantin accepted a relatively meagre profit margin for the first edition of Sambucus' emblems. The real profit could only be made in later editions. As was said before, changing the format also offered an opportunity to maximise the revenues. Plantin printed most of the re-editions of his emblem books in the smaller and cheaper seidecimo size. This reduced the cost of paper considerably, which made the books cheaper, and consequently more easily available to a large audience. Thus the risk to the publisher of failing to regain the investment was spread out and the profit margin increased at the same time.

Less is known about the dealings for the other original emblem book publication, Junius' *Emblemata*. In this case there is no proof that the author paid any of the costs. Nor can the profit margins

⁸⁹ Ibidem; I have not found further indications of this in the accounts; Max Rooses, 1903 (n. 3) does not look into this problem; it is specified, however, Sambucus was present at the signing of the agreement for the woodcuts with Cornelis Muller (Rooses, "De Plantijnsche uitgaven," 7). Furthermore, Plantin does refer to Sambucus' financial contribution to an unspecified publication in a letter to Adriaan Burchius, d.d. 22 January, 1582; Rooses and Denucé (eds.), *Correspondance de Plantin*, vol. VII, no. 976.

⁹⁰ Abondio did not deliver the plates within the arranged time; see Gerstinger, *Die Briefe*, nos. xxxv (l. 17), xl (l. 8); xliii (l. 16), all addressed to Crato and no. xxxvi (l. 16), addressed to Zwinger.

⁹¹ *Icones veterum aliquot ac recentium medicorum* (Antwerp: C. Plantin, 1574); see my "From the Republic of Letters to the Olympus. The Rise and Fall of Medical Humanism in 67 Portraits," in J.F. van Dijkhuizen (a.o., eds.), *Living in Posterity: Essays in Honour of Bart Westerweel* (Hilversum, 2004), forthcoming.

of this collection be calculated. By judging the number of editions, which is, however, not a reliable indicator of profitability, it seems a successful publication: eleven editions in three languages appeared from 1565 to 1589, the highest number of all re-editions of Plantin's emblem books.

Altogether, it can safely be stated that the immediate commercial importance of emblem books for Plantin should not be overrated. This is even more apparent when the emblem production is viewed in the context of Plantin's other publications. In numbers, for example, the genre (reprints included) is in no way competitive with that of religious works. The sales potential of emblem books was limited by a smaller audience, in spite of Plantin's commercially fuelled arguments to the contrary. Thus, it is clear that profit cannot have been the only incentive for him to publish emblem books. The margin was not exceptional, and the number of books or editions produced is not extraordinary.⁹² This does not imply that the emblem books were of no commercial importance, however. From the development of the firm, sketched earlier, it has become clear that Plantin adopted a strategy to expand his business by aiming at an international market. From the perspective of this marketing strategy it seems likely that Plantin considered emblem books a useful tool.

The Marketing Profile of Emblems

It is no secret that emblems were particularly popular as a form of learned amusement in the setting of universities. Complaining about the emblem vogue, the English humanist and poet Gabriel Harvey (1550–1631) wrote to Edmund Spenser that the students of Cambridge neglected Aristotle and the classics for Claude Paradin and others.⁹³ In a letter of 1576 Claude Mignault wrote to Plantin from Paris about the eager expectations in the university of the new Alciato edition:

⁹² In fact, the number of editions of illustrated books (1555–1589) amounts to 371, which is a relatively modest 18% of his output; see L. Voet, "Het geïllustreerde boek in de Officina Plantiniana (1555–1589)," in *Rubens and his World. Bijdragen—Études—Studies—Beiträge opgedragen aan Prof. Dr. Ir. R.-A. d'Hulst*, ed. Arnout Balis a.o. (Antwerpen, 1985), p. 41.

⁹³ Referred to by Huston Diehl, "Graven images: Protestant Emblem Books in

Je ne vous puis exprimer par parolles combien il y a de gens icy en nostre université qui attendent ce petit livre avec grande devotion: vous assurant bien que je suis contraint de dire a plusieurs qui le demandent, qu'il est desja sur la presse.⁹⁴

Neo-Latin emblems like those of Alciato appealed especially to an academic readership, consisting not only of students but also of teachers and scholars. Authors and publishers knew that their work appealed to an intellectual elite and used this marketing profile strategically. Men of letters constituted an attractive group of buyers with a professional interest in books and with a network of influential friends or patrons. This is also true for Plantin; in some respects he seems to have used the emblem as a social instrument. His books were not only designed to communicate words and ideas, but also served to confirm relations and reputations.

Again, it is important to keep in mind that most of the emblem editions were produced between 1563 and 1567, when Plantin was investing large sums of money in his business.⁹⁵ But a prominent position in the international publishing world depended on more than money alone. There were political and social factors that complicated the business practice. Sambucus' life and, more particularly, the strategies behind the dedications in his emblems, which will be analysed in chapter four, show to what extent and in which ways the social structure of the Republic of Letters was based on patronage. Not only scholars, but publishers, too, had to maintain their networks of relations. Humanist emblem books were an attractive means in this respect. Apart from the decorative appeal of the illustrations, the erudite symbols and literary allusions prevented it from seeming trivial. Sambucus' introduction to his emblem book anticipates exactly these presumptions. As was said before, the text is marked all over as a learned preface to a learned book, not only by the use of language, for instance through many expressions in Greek, but also by explicit denials of possible triviality and references to great classical examples. Even if the pictures themselves are

England," *Renaissance Quarterly* 39 (1986), p. 49; the letter (to be dated after 1576–1599) is published in Robert J. Clements, Lorna Levant (eds.), *Renaissance letters. Revelations of a World Reborn* (New York, 1976), pp. 40–43.

⁹⁴ Rooses and Denucé, *Correspondance de Christophe Plantin*, vol. V, p. 189, no. 733.

⁹⁵ Voet, *Golden Compasses*, vol. 2, p. 391.

fairly common, Sambucus argues, there is more to the emblem than the one would think at first sight:

Ipsa rerum simulacra si vulgaria sunt, abditum innuant sensum, obscuriora, (non tamen κακόζηλα, aut κακόπλαστα, ἀπίθανα cuiusmodi vel in Virgilio et Homero diligentia conquiras et Aristophane, qui nubes inducit loquentes) doceant apertius, dum analogia sint.

(Let a banal picture suggest a hidden sense, let an obscure image teach a clear message—if only image and intention are in agreement with each other. One must avoid affected, ill-conceived and unlikely images such as one can find even in Virgil and Homer when looking carefully, and in Aristophanes, who introduces talking clouds.)⁹⁶

In the next chapter the rhetorical strategy of this text will be considered in more detail, and it may suffice here to observe that the publisher shared the author's interest on this point. For Plantin the social relevance of the book may well have been similar to that of Sambucus. He could present himself to an international elite as a publisher of both learned and elegant works: The books would “certainly be worthy of both their author and their publisher,” as Sambucus says of Junius' emblems.⁹⁷ In this way the Latin emblem production could contribute to upgrading Plantin's status as a publisher. Sambucus' emblem ‘Spes aulica’ (Expectations at court [231]), dedicated to Plantin, is an intriguing reflection of this social circuit of the Republic of Letters (fig. 13).

Playing with the topos of courtly life, the emblem warns against expecting too much of the court. References to the position of the suitors at Odysseus' court, and to those of Helena invest the emblem with a classical authority. According to the text, spending time and money are no guarantees for success. The picture shows the game of skittles, which was alluded to in the epigram. According to the emblem, attempting to realise one's ambitions at court amounts to little more than gambling.

Supposing that there is a relation intended between the emblem and the dedicatee, the implicit suggestion would be that Plantin nursed hope for imperial support. Sambucus, in this view, would

⁹⁶ Sambucus, *Emblemata* fol. A2ro.; translation by Wesseling, “Testing Modern Emblem Theory”, p. 14.

⁹⁷ Letter of Sambucus to Junius, d.d. 10 February, 1564, included in Junius, *Emblemata*, fol. A3vo.



Fig. 11. 'Spes aulica' (Expectations at court [231]) gives a friendly advice to Plantin, who was in search for royal patronage to support his business ambitions.

warn the publisher against fostering too much expectation of the courtly circles he knew to be fickle and complex. Although it is hard to prove the implicit relation between the emblem and the dedicatee, this interpretation aptly fits the state of the publishing firm at the time. Plantin was indeed looking for a powerful patron in order to expand his business. He had just made considerable investments to accomplish structural growth, possible only through a partnership with the van Bomberghens.⁹⁸ This financial support, however, still had to pay off. In the meantime, imperial backing, for instance in the form of printing privileges, could help to secure his production. Plantin only stood a chance of gaining this kind of imperial support at the intercession of someone who was well versed in the courtly circles.⁹⁹

There are indications that Sambucus was this intercessor, and that he helped Plantin in achieving imperial printing licenses. In fact, on several occasions Sambucus can be seen to act as an agent between the Netherlandish commercial interests and Vienna. The first instance is his involvement in presenting the latest publication of Plantin's friend and colleague Hubert Goltzius to both emperor Ferdinand and (then) king Maximilian in 1564.¹⁰⁰ The second example is his concern for the distribution of Plantin's books in Vienna. In this matter, Plantin replied that he would be open for any reliable business partner in Vienna, subsequently explaining to Sambucus the terms for a possible agreement.¹⁰¹

Plantin's *caesareum generale privilegium* dates from 21 February 1565, protecting all his existing publications and plans for the future for a period of six years. One of these plans was the edition of what later would become the *Biblia Regia*. Before the Spanish king gave his support to this grand project, Plantin had tried to find a powerful patron

⁹⁸ Voet has calculated that the Plantin press had a great deficit in 1566. Voet, *Golden Compasses*, vol. 2, p. 391.

⁹⁹ H.-J. Koppitz, "Die Privilegia impressoria des Haus-, Hof-, und Staatsarchiv in Wien. Ein Überblick," *Gutenberg Jahrbuch* 69 (1994), pp. 193, 197; Karl Schottenloher, "Die Druckprivilegien des 16. Jahrhunderts," *Gutenberg Jahrbuch* 8 (1933), p. 91.

¹⁰⁰ Gerstinger, *Die Briefe*, pp. 62–65, no. x (Sambucus also specifies how to present the book); the book concerned is *C. Julius Caesar* (Bruges: H. Goltzius, 1563), consisting of portraits of ancient emperors. Sambucus also furnished an introductory letter included in the preliminaries of the book.

¹⁰¹ Letter from Plantin to Sambucus, d.d. 12 January, 1566, see Van Durme, *Supplément à la correspondance de Christophe Plantin*, pp. 25–27, esp. p. 26.

in Germany.¹⁰² The expensive imperial licence, however, served in the first place to protect Plantin's books against pirating. A summary of it was included in all of the books expected to sell well in Germany.¹⁰³ Sambucus' intermediary role between Plantin and the censors at court can be inferred from a letter by Ortelius to Crato, where he asks him for a similar favour.¹⁰⁴ From the dedications in the new edition of the *Emblemata* it seems Sambucus knew his way at court: one of these is dedicated to Wolfgang Haller, who had signed Plantin's imperial privilege as financial official of the emperor.¹⁰⁵ In other instances Sambucus arranged privileges for the Oporinus firm and a pass for Plantin giving free access to the Frankfurt book fair.¹⁰⁶

As was said before, in the end the Spanish king, and not the emperor would become Plantin's most important patron. In achieving this support, the intermediate role played by Benito Arias Montano was of crucial importance.¹⁰⁷ Perhaps Sambucus' emblem, first included in the 1566 edition, can thus be seen as an early allusion to Plantin's

¹⁰² Plantin to de Çayas, d.d. 19 December, 1566, Denucé and Rooses, *Correspondance de Christophe Plantin*, vol. I, pp. 48–52, no. 21, esp. p. 51; see also Rekers, *Benito Arias Montano*, p. 45.

¹⁰³ Voet, *Golden Compasses*, vol. 2, p. 274; listed by Schottenloher, "Die Druckprivilegien," p. 105, no. 116.

¹⁰⁴ Letter from Ortelius to Crato, d.d. 24 June, [1576], *Supplément à la correspondance* 155, no. 129: "Video nonnullos tale privilegium per Sambucum impetrasse, ut Birckmannus et Plantinus." (I understand that some, like Birckman and Plantin have obtained such a privilege through the help of Sambucus.) "Birckmannus" refers probably to Johann Birckman also mentioned in Sambucus' correspondence. Johann was the son of Arnold, the founder of the *Officina birckmannica* active in Antwerp, Louvain and Cologne from 1542–1657; see also Gerstinger, *Die Briefe*, pp. 62–65. In another letter (d.d. 22 November, 1576) Ortelius thanks Crato for his advice in the matter, and promises to send money for the privilege, *Supplément à la correspondance* 155, no. 133. In this time and later, Sambucus' influence at court (in Prague) was probably insufficient; in a letter of 10 May, 1581 Ortelius asks Crato to arrange a new privilege for Plantin, renewing the general one of 1565, see *Supplément à la correspondance* 186, no. 158. In the first years after Sambucus had left Antwerp, he was clearly considered as a potentially useful contact, as can also be seen from Junius' attempt to invoke Sambucus' patronage (either as an intermediate agent, or as a patron himself), see Rooses and Denucé, *Correspondance de Christophe Plantin*, vol. 3, pp. 6–7, no. 335 (see below p. 27, n. 84).

¹⁰⁵ For the use of dedications see chapter four; for a list of dedicatees, see appendix two.

¹⁰⁶ For the privileges, see the letter from Sambucus to Oporinus, d.d. 8 February 1568, Gerstinger, *Die Briefe*, pp. 85–87, no. xxiv and the one to Crato, d.d. 20 November 1570, *ibidem*, pp. 114–116, no. xliii; for the pass for Plantin, see a letter d.d. 12 September, 1575; *ibidem*, pp. 181–182, no. xci.

¹⁰⁷ Rekers, *Benito Arias Montano*, pp. 75–76, for his role in the edition of the *Biblia regia*, pp. 45–69.

hopes.¹⁰⁸ The author himself had some experience in these matters. As we have seen previously, he had been trying to gain a position at court since the early 1550s, and dedicated his collection of emblems to the emperor.

Apart from the intended relation between the dedicatee and the moral of the emblem, the dedication in any case placed Plantin's name among the famous members of the Republic of Letters. In this way again author and publisher could profit from each other: the publicity helped the author to mark his position among the important humanists of the Republic of Letters. From Plantin's perspective the presence of this humanist network in Sambucus' emblems, and to a minor extent, also in Junius' collection, might be seen as a form of 'direct marketing'.

Considering the commercial practice of publishing thus helps to assess the functionality of the emblem book. Plantin's prime objectives with his emblem books in general were probably to stimulate concrete sales and to position his firm as an outstanding international publishing house. This view is enhanced by the fact that the emblematic works were all published in the period before the great expansion of the firm. Especially the reprint editions were likely to be profitable. Yet, none of the emblem books can be called a major best-seller. Compared to the number of copies sold of his religious publications, the emblem book production constitutes only a moderate part of the total output. Once Plantin had succeeded in making substantial profits from his production of Catholic church books, the production of emblem books slims down.

Another likely motivation for publishing the emblem books was their marketing potential. Emblems like those by Sambucus were particularly attractive to humanist buyers. This target market was important to Plantin not only for its potential interest in his other products, but also for their influence in the upper echelons of society. The publication of emblem books in general, and that of Sambucus in particular, may thus also be seen as a strategic investment to gain support from influential patrons. At the same time it determined the image of the *Officina Plantiniana*. Plantin positioned his publishing house in the heart of the Republic of Letters.

¹⁰⁸ The emblem dedicated to Plantin first appeared in the second edition of the *Emblemata*. Sambucus and Plantin had not met long before the first edition of the book was initiated. This probably accounts for the absence of the emblem in the *editio princeps*.

CHAPTER THREE

SAMBUCUS ABOUT THE EMBLEM

Sambucus wrote in some strikingly different veins about his emblems. In a letter to Junius, for example, Sambucus seems critical rather than simply modest about his own achievements. “If you see them,” he writes referring to the dominant contribution of the illustrators, “the desire to read them will fade away, and really you will say that ‘they are more fit to be cast out than dung.’”¹ With these last words in Greek, Sambucus plays with Heraclitus’ expression that “*corpses* are more fit to be cast out than dung” (my italics). Whereas Sambucus here associates his emblems with dead, even worthless objects, he strikes another tone in a letter to Paulus Manutius, offering him “a copy of trifles full of sheer delight” (*exemplum nugarum universa lactitia effusarum*).² Both of these examples are taken from Sambucus’ correspondence and were hardly the sort of texts one might expect to be quoted by way of advertisement. In the *Emblemata* itself, however, Sambucus used a different language to introduce and evaluate his work.

Having explored the author’s life and the publisher’s world, let us turn to the ways in which Sambucus connects the emblem book to the world of his readers, by concentrating on the introduction to the emblems in the chapter, and on the use of dedications in the actual emblems in the next one. Both the preface and the dedications help the reader to situate the emblems in their literary and social context. As such these elements are also instruments for the author to guide the reader’s perception.

After opening the book, the reader will first encounter its preliminary pages, including the title page, the text of the privilege, the

¹ Sambucus to Junius, d.d. 10 February 1564, included in the preface to Junius’ *Emblemata*, p. 6: “Quae si videris, minuetur desiderium legendi ea et vere τῶν κοπρίων ἐκβλητότερα dices.” The original Greek expression is “νέκυες κοπρίων ἐκβλητότεροι,” attributed to Heraclitus, ed. M. Marcovich (Merida, 1967), no. 75 [Diehls-Kranz, no. 96].

² Sambucus to Paulus Manutius, d.d. 1 December 1571, Gerstinger, *Die Briefe*, pp. 123–125, no. xlvi.

preface, and a portrait of Sambucus. The preface, entitled 'De emblemate' (About the emblem), is undoubtedly the most remarkable part of this section.³ With this introductory text Sambucus introduces the main part of the book, the emblems. On the one hand the author wants to point out to the reader *why* he should read the text, by emphasising, among other things, the moral or intellectual use of the text, its originality, and its coherent unity. But he also tries to guide the reader in *how* to approach the text, for example by indicating the author's intention, by informing him about the history of the genre, and about the genesis of the book.⁴

One objective of this chapter is to examine the rhetorical strategies behind the preface. In general, the text, neatly ordered into four paragraphs, is first and foremost concerned with enhancing the value of the emblem. Sambucus presents both types of arguments (why and how to read the emblems) under the guise of general observations. The first paragraph provides an explanation of the term 'emblemata'; in the second paragraph the symbolic nature of the emblem is elaborated upon and various types of emblems are classified. Then, the strategy of hiding meaning in emblems is discussed in the third paragraph. The concluding paragraph refers to the social context, presenting the book to its readership with the conventional exploitation of the topos of modesty.

However, the text is not only a rhetorical device to keep the reader interested. From another perspective, the larger part of it constitutes the first example of what might be called theoretical reflection on the genre of the emblem. It is the question, however, if the notion of emblem theory is a useful hermeneutic guide for the text.

Theoretical Expectations

If Sambucus intended 'De emblemate' exclusively as a lucid treatise on the principles of a genre, he failed. Even for trained experts of the emblem the text is not easy to understand. It shows a combi-

³ In the first edition of the *Emblemata*, the text is printed on pages 3–7; in the editions 1569 and later on fols. A2ro.–vo.

⁴ For the various functions of prefaces and the rhetoric employed, see Gérard Genette, *Paratexts. Thresholds of Interpretation* (Cambridge, 1997), pp. 196–236.

nation of complex sentences with often abstruse vocabulary and nebulous argumentation. Not surprisingly, in recent times several scholars complained about the “extremely difficult and hybrid prose,” characterising the text as “hard as a diamond,” or simply as “a peculiar and difficult piece of Latin.”⁵ Furthermore, the text has been criticised for its theoretical shortcomings. Many issues that are essential for an elementary theory of the emblem are not addressed, as, for example, the relationship between textual parts and pictures or the poetic structure of the epigram. At the same time, the theoretical observations that are presented are often expressed in ways that seem unnecessarily inconsistent or redundant. The replacement of the text by new prefaces in later Dutch and French translations of the *Emblemata* has therefore frequently been explained as a consequence of all these ‘shortcomings’, rather than as a way of serving a different category of reader.⁶

We should not forget, however, that the (modern) reader’s disappointment is primarily caused by his own expectations with regard to the text. If considered from the perspective of emblem theory, which frequently has been the case until now, instead of emblem reception, Sambucus’ preface to the *Emblemata* will inevitably be found to be disappointing. Obviously, the text was not written for the specialist in emblem studies.⁷ In fact, at this point in the history of the genre, the very status of the emblem was not yet self-evident.

⁵ See Holger Homann, *Studien zur Emblematik des 16. Jahrhunderts* (Utrecht, 1971), p. 44; O. Scholer, “Ein Text hart wie ein Diamant oder De Emblemate des Joannes Sambucus Tirnaviensis,” *Etudes classiques, publiés par le Centre Universitaire de Luxembourg* 5 (1993), 69–209, and Ari Wesseling, “Testing Modern Emblem Theory,” p. 4. Denis L. Drysdall published an edition and translation “Joannes Sambucus, ‘De Emblemate’ (Text and Translation),” *Emblematica* 5,1 (1991), 111–120.

⁶ See for instance Homann, *Studien*, pp. 43–51, esp. 44: “Dabei bedient er sich jedoch einer derart schwierigen Mischprosa, daß nicht nur der niederländischen Übersetzer auf eine Wiedergabe dieser Vorrede verzichtet, sondern auch die moderne Forschung noch keine Gesamtinterpretation vorgelegt hat [. . .].” For a study of how Aneau’s *Picta poesis* and *Imagination poetique* were adapted to different readerships, see Alison Saunders, “The Bifocal Emblem Book: or, How to Make One Work Cater for Two Distinct Audiences,” in *Emblems in Glasgow. A Collection of Essays Drawing on the Stirling Maxwell Collection in Glasgow University Library*, ed. Alison Adams (Glasgow, 1992), pp. 113–133.

⁷ Harms and Küchen, “Nachwort,” p. 284: “Sambucus’ Latein ist so reich an Anspielungen und an griechischen Elementen, daß er für seinen Traktat außerhalb hochgelehrter Kreise kaum Wirkung erhoffen konnte.” Scholer, “Ein Text hart wie ein Diamant,” p. 76: “Jedenfalls hat Sambucus [. . .] versucht, das neue Genus der

The Term 'Emblema'

What, then, did Sambucus mean by the term emblem? The first paragraph of the preface is devoted to defining the word 'emblema'. It opens *in medias res* by taking up the three traditional interpretations of the word:

Quod emblematum, quae fere κατὰ πάρεργον operibus pro materiae locique ratione ornamenti atque varietatis caussa inseruntur, genera sint tria, notum est. Quorum exemplo quae praesertim ad morum doctrinam pertinent, figuris quibusdam, poetarum ut modo delectent magisque accendant, obduci vera involvique solent, ut ὡς ἐν τύπῳ notae ac signa ὀριστικά sint καὶ κατανοητικά. Nam τὸ ἐμβάλλεσθαι iniicere ac proponere aliquid obscurius quod explicationem atque cogitationem requirat etiam Graecis significat. Sed sine dubitatione aut interrogatione melius fiunt ac problematis obscuriora et dilemmatis, aenigmatis apertiora videntur.

(Emblemata (inlay-work), which are usually applied as accessory elements to buildings for the sake of decoration and variety, as the material used and the place may require, are of three kinds, as is generally known. After the example of such inlay-work truths, especially moral truths, are overlaid with and wrapped in allegorical images, in order to entertain and rouse the reader, as poetry does. They are general marks and signs that characterise and describe a given concept. For

Emblemata rational zu erfassen und in seiner Gesetzmäßigkeit zu bestimmen.”; Wesseling (“Testing Modern Emblem Theory,” p. 7) posits that Sambucus’ text was left out in later editions because it was “too theoretical”; Drysdall (“Joannes Sambucus,” p. 111) observes: “The preface is far from being a treatise, and the theory it offers [. . .] is relatively slight,” and then assumes disappointment on the part of Sambucus’ contemporary readers (p. 113): “If his contemporaries held his emblems in some regard, it was perhaps because of the quality of his practice rather than this somewhat sketchy theory [. . .]” A remarkable example of anachronism is Homann’s critique that Sambucus does not meet the standards set by Albrecht Schöne in his modern emblem theory (*Studien*, p. 50): “Was nun die oben erwähnten zwei Forderungen (die der potentiellen Faktizität und der ideellen Priorität der *pictura*) betrifft, so findet sich bei Sambucus nur ein Hinweis auf die erstere [. . .],” and notably: “Dieses Bestehen auf dargestellter Wirklichkeit ist jedoch nicht begründet in einer tieferen Einsicht in das Wesen des Emblems und in die Funktionalität seiner Teile [. . .],” finally resulting in a reversion of perspective (pp. 50–51): “Von der ideellen Priorität des emblematischen Bildes gegenüber dem Text weiss Sambucus nichts; ja er scheint dieses zeitliche Verhältnis geradezu umzukehren [. . .].” Compare Karel Porteman’s important observations on the messages of the “dubious meta-texts that constitute the preliminaries”: “Although theirs is often a lip service, they enable us all the same to isolate more ‘explicit’ indications of reception—provided only we treat them with the necessary knowledge and care.” Porteman, “The Earliest Reception,” p. 33.

'*emballesthai*' in Greek still means 'to insert', 'present' something obscure that requires explanation and reflection, though emblems are better if they do not contain 'dubitatio' or 'interrogatio'; they are more obscure than 'problems' and 'dilemmas', while clearer than enigmas.)⁸

As Gérard Genette observed, a concern for defining the genre to which a text belongs is especially useful in those areas that are still undefined or developing.⁹ This is particularly true of the emblem. At this point in time, providing a definition was not only a matter of theoretical interest. In the early 1560s the term emblem was not yet fully established as a denotation for a literary genre.¹⁰ Since the first use of the term as a book title by Andrea Alciato in 1531, it only gradually came to indicate a genre.

In the Dutch translation of Sambucus' emblems, written in 1566, Marcus Antonius Gillis is quite aware that the emblem still needs introduction for the Dutch readers, placing his treatise on the emblem explicitly in a prefatory context:

In order that you, beloved reader, might read this book with greater profit and pleasure, and in order that my work might not per adventure be wrongly rejected, I have deemed it necessary to clarify the origins, the use and the properties of this mode of writing, the more so, because it is wholly new in our language and has not been explained by anyone so far. In order to proceed in an orderly manner, I begin with the meaning of the name emblem. Read intelligently and judge afterwards.¹¹

In Sambucus' preface it is clear that the term is not yet automatically connected to what today is regarded a specific, literary genre. In the first place, Sambucus states that it is well-known that the term emblem can be used in three different ways. According to this division 'emblem' can refer to pieces applied in the construction of mosaics, or to particular ornaments on ancient vases, or, thirdly and most commonly, it can refer to something inserted, for example in rhetorical contexts.

⁸ Sambucus, *Emblemata*, fol. A2ro. The text and translations of the preface are taken from Wesseling, "Testing Modern Emblem Theory," pp. 12–15 (with some minor changes).

⁹ Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 224; about the rhetorics of Latin prefaces see also Tore Janson, *Latin Prose Prefaces. Studies in Literary Conventions* (Studia Latina Stockholmiensia, 13) (Stockholm, 1964).

¹⁰ Daniel Russell, "The Term 'Emblème' in Sixteenth-Century France," *Neophilologus* 59 (1975), 337–351.

¹¹ Trans. Porteman, "The Earliest Reception," p. 45.

By referring to this definition as “a well-known fact,” Sambucus hints at Alciato’s use of the term for his successful book. It is one of the surprising aspects of the preface that this famous collection is not explicitly mentioned, apart from some indirect criticism at the end (which will be discussed later in this chapter). However, here Sambucus does not only hint at the literary form of the emblem. He also seems to assume as common knowledge what originally derives from Budé’s comments on the word ‘emblemata’ in his *Annotationes in Pandectas* and which was taken up by the widely used lexicon of Calepinus.¹² This would imply that Sambucus expected his audience to think of these connotations rather than of the literary genre exclusively, or at least found it elegant to pretend so. At the same time, it makes one curious to know the function of this apparent repetition of commonly known facts. Is it a form of *praeteritio* by which the author is discreetly informing the ignorant reader about the origin of the term, or is it an introductory remark, implicitly preparing the reader for a new and not so obvious adaptation of the term?

In order to answer this question, a further investigation is required into the use of the term by Sambucus and his predecessors. This shall be done from three interrelated perspectives: the authorial intention, the history of the genre and the intended readership.

Firstly, Sambucus’ broad definition indicates that he primarily wishes to situate his work in a broader context than that of Alciato’s emblems alone. With the etymology of the word, Sambucus replaces the association with Alciato’s work by a more general frame of reference, based on the Greek etymology. Departing from this general, threefold division, Sambucus defines the literary emblem as a form of literary inlay in which moral truths are “wrapped up in certain figures” in order to “please and to stimulate like poetry.” This, he argues, is in line with the sense of the Greek word ἐμβάλλεσθαι, which means inserting “something rather obscure which requires explanation and reflection.” In other words, Sambucus suggests linking the practical use in the sense of ‘mosaic’ to a more figurative, in this case literary use. Of course, Alciato had made this connection before him in his dedicatory poem to Peutingering.

¹² See Scholer, “Ein Text hart wie ein Diamant,” pp. 81–85; Wesseling, “Testing Modern Emblem Theory,” p. 4.

Sambucus concludes the paragraph by situating the emblem more precisely in the literary landscape, connecting it to the ‘problema’, ‘dilemma’ and ‘aenigma’.¹³ The ‘ambiguities’ (dubitatio) and ‘questions’ (interrogatio) refer to figures of speech, characteristic of the problems Sambucus compares his emblems to. Just like these problems, dilemmas and enigmas are technical terms for questions with an increasing degree of difficulty.¹⁴ This comparison may be given to clarify the concept of the emblem as a literary form. But is it actually reasonable to expect that the reader is unfamiliar with this new literary phenomenon?

Only two years later, the Dutch translator of Sambucus’ emblems would acknowledge the activities of “many men of learning” as part of the same literary tradition, specified as “the searching and finding of such emblems.” In introducing the emblem to a Dutch readership, he mentions the merits of Alciato in particular.¹⁵ One might argue, however, that Gillis’ text was influenced by Plantin’s recent activities, the emblems of Junius having only just been published. Within two years, the term ‘emblemata’ had been used for two significant new collections, both grounded in the humanist epigram tradition. Moreover, as we shall see in more detail later, Gillis could build on Sambucus’ explanation in order to present a new, but respectable literary tradition to the Dutch readers. At the time when Sambucus’ emblems were first published, however, the reader might be familiar with the emblems of Alciato, but still not have a clear idea of its meaning as a generic term. A closer look at the early history of the emblem reveals something of the diversity in forms and terminology.

¹³ *Problemata* refer to phrasing of philosophical problems as questions; examples of *problemata* are given by Aristotle; compare Scholer, “Ein Text hart wie ein Diamant,” pp. 97–98, and Homann, *Studien*, p. 45 n. 83. A combination of riddles with emblems is found in the collection of Hadrianus Junius, *Emblemata. Eiusdem Aenigmatum libellus* (Antwerp: C. Plantin, 1565). Later also the emblemist Nicolaus Reusner would publish a collection (of texts on) riddles, *Aenigmatographia, sive Sylloge aenigmatum et grifhorum convivialium ex variis auctoribus collectorum* (Frankfurt on the Main: Z. Palthenius, 1601–1602). For more on the humanist riddle, see Jozef IJsewijn, Dirk Sacré, *Companion to Neo-Latin Studies. Part 2: Literary, Linguistic, Philological and Editorial Questions* (Supplementa Humanistica Lovaniensia 14) (Louvain, 1998), pp. 123–124.

¹⁴ Scholer, “Ein Text hart wie ein Diamant,” pp. 96–103.

¹⁵ The text of the Dutch preface is analysed, edited and translated by Porteman, “The Earliest Reception,” in particular pp. 36–40, 42–47.

Sambucus' silence about Alciato is in sharp contrast to the latter's prominent place as founder of the genre. The story of how his manuscript collection of epigrams, originally intended as a new year's gift for Conrad Peutinger, was published by Heinrich Steyner has been told many times before.¹⁶ In particular, the use of the term 'emblem' has been subject for debate: did Alciato conceive of an 'emblem' as an epigram proper, or did he think of the combination of word and image?¹⁷

Intriguing as these problems may be, one should not fixate on the lack of clarity about Alciato's intentions.¹⁸ More important is the reception of the word 'emblem' by his successors in the new genre. In the first forty years after the first edition of Alciato's emblem book, many new initiatives for emblem books were taken, mainly in France.¹⁹ Few of these authors, however, were engaged in theorising about the emblem and the earliest examples of reflection on the literary form were written well after the first flowering of the emblem.²⁰ These texts were predominantly written by Italian theorists and con-

¹⁶ The best introduction to the main research developments is Bernhard F. Scholz, "The 1531 Augsburg Edition of Alciatus' *Emblemata*: A Survey of Research," *Emblematica* 5,2 (1991), 213–254; see furthermore Pierre Laurens' useful general introduction to Alciato's emblems in the facsimile edition of the *Emblemata* (Lyon: Macé Bonhomme, 1551; Paris, 1997).

¹⁷ For an analysis of the term 'emblem' see Claudie Balavoine's lucid discussion "Les Emblèmes d'Alciat: sens et contresens" in: Yves Giraud (ed.), *L'Emblème à la Renaissance. Actes de la journée d'études du 10 mai 1980* (Paris, 1982), pp. 49–59 and Bernhard F. Scholz, "'Libellum composui epigrammaton, cui titulum feci Emblemata': Alciato's Use of the Expression *Emblema* Once Again," *Emblematica* 1 (1986), 213–226.

¹⁸ Scholz, "Libellum composui epigrammaton," p. 213.

¹⁹ For the history of the emblem in France, see Saunders, *The Sixteenth-Century French Emblem Book* and her *The Seventeenth-Century French Emblem Book*. Apart from two early French translations of Alciato, one by J. Le Fèvre (1536) and the other by Barthélemy Aneau (1549), the following collections of emblems were published between 1531 and 1564: Guillaume de La Perrière, *Le Theatre des bons engins* (Paris: D. Janot, 1539); idem, *La Morosophie* [...] (Lyon: M. Bonhomme, 1553); Gilles Corrozet, *Hecatographie* [...] (Paris: D. Janot, 1540); idem, a section entitled *Emblemes* is included in his edition and translation of the *tabula Cebetis: Le Tableau de Cebes de Thebes* [...] (Paris: D. Janot, 1540); Guillaume Guérout, *Le Premier livre des emblemes* [...] (Lyons: B. Arnoullet, 1550); Barthélemy Aneau, *Picta poesis* [...] (Lyons: M. Bonhomme, 1552), in the same year also published by Bonhomme in a French edition as *Imagination poetique*; Achille Bocchi, *Symbolicarum quaestionum* [...] *libri quinque* (Bologna: *Academia Bocchiana*, 1555); Pierre Coustau, *Pegma* [...] (Lyons: M. Bonhomme, 1555), in the same year also published by Bonhomme in a French edition as *Le Pegme* [...].

²⁰ See Saunders, *The Sixteenth-Century French Emblem Book*, pp. 1–28, esp. pp. 1–4.

cerned the related form of the *impresa*, like Paolo Giovio's *Dialogo dell'impresie militari e amorose* (Rome, 1555).²¹

Achille Bocchi is an exception to the rule, by making his first *symbolum* a 'symbol of symbols', answering the question as to what constitutes a symbol. In this iambic paraphrase of Budé's earlier explanation of the term, Bocchi refers to the original meaning of the Greek term as 'token of friendship', then he discusses the use of pictures in the Greek mysteries as a hidden language, and joins it to allegorical imagery. At this point he refers to Alciato's emblems as an example of this practice, bracketing the emblem with the Pythagorean symbol, the allegory and the enigma: "Fuere symbola / Priscorum in arcanis diu / Mysteriis [. . .] Huiusmodi / Sunt Pythagorica Symbola / Ἀλληγορίαί, Ἀινίγματα / Ut Alciati Emblemata."²² This reference, however, does not help us much further, since it can still be regarded as a reference to a book title rather than to a generic concept.

Clearer indications of the semantic field of the term can be found by looking at the actual use by early emblem writers. Daniel Russell has done this for the early French emblem book.²³ He showed that in the first decades after the publication of Alciato's emblems, the term 'emblème' was not exclusively reserved for a particular literary shape. Until 1555, the term commonly refers to a kind of detachable ornament, including, in a metaphorical sense, a borrowed rhetorical decoration.²⁴

In specific emblematic contexts the term was not exclusively applied to either text or *pictura*. In the case of Alciato's dedication to Peutingier, it is interesting to see that the French translators Jean Le Fèvre (1536) and Barthélemy Aneau (1549) understood the emblem as an iconographic model for craftsmen. They did not only place the emblem in an older French tradition of literary instruction to artists, but also connected it to the device.²⁵ Both translators supposed the work to be illustrated.

²¹ Paolo Giovio, *Dialogo dell'impresie militari e amorose*, edited by Maria Luisa Doglio (Rome, 1978); on the *impresa* in the sixteenth century, see Dorigen Caldwell, *Studies in Sixteenth-Century Italian Impresie*, monographic study included in *Emblematica* 11 (2001), pp. 1–257.

²² Bocchi, symbol 1, lines 31–38; see Rolet, "Achille Bocchi's *Symbolicarum quaestionum libri quinque*," in Enenkel and Visser, *Mundus Emblematicus*, pp. 113–118.

²³ Russell, "The Term 'Emblème'."

²⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 341.

²⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 339; Saunders, *The Sixteenth-Century French Emblem Book*, pp. 17–18.

Sambucus and Plantin are the immediate successors of these early, French producers of emblem books. Quite literally they brought the knowledge of emblems from France (and Italy) to Northern Europe, when they engaged in the publication of Sambucus' emblems. The use of emblems for practical applications by craftsmen, for example, is also suggested in Sambucus' preface, albeit less elaborate. Just like his French predecessors, Sambucus did not consider the term emblem as an exclusively literary notion.

Clearly, in many respects the emblem had not yet taken a clear shape and was only beginning to become established as a literary term.²⁶ In fact, for the Neo-Latin production Sambucus was the first since Alciato to use the term emblem for the title of a new emblem book. Other recent emblem books in Latin used various terms, such as Aneau (*Picta poesis*), Coustau (*Pegma*) and Bocchi (*Symbolicae quaestiones*). Thus, the development of the genre may at least partly explain Sambucus' introduction to the term 'emblem.'

Terminology and Classifications

In this light, Sambucus' discussion of the terminology of the different parts of the emblem becomes easier to understand. He does not tell whether 'emblem' signifies the combination of the epigram (with or without title) and the *pictura* or one of the components in particular.²⁷ Only by attentive reading can it be understood from the second paragraph that it refers to the picture in the first place. Here Sambucus suggests what he considers a more appropriate term for the picture:

Symbola autem seu παράσημα ipsae rerum picturae ac imagines dici, quasi tesserae, verius possunt; cognata haec tamen et vix ut εἰκὼν καὶ μεταφορὰ dissident. Ac etsi haec ut problemata universa constitui possunt, trium tamen praecipue sunt generum, quomodo et ipsorum expo-

²⁶ In contrast to what Scholer claims in "Ein Text hart wie ein Diamant," pp. 103–104.

²⁷ Sambucus nowhere mentions the use of the *inscriptio*, or title separately. This has been regarded as a sign that Sambucus conceived of a two-part structure and did not consider the motto to be part of the emblem (Wesseling, "Testing Modern Emblem Theory," p. 5; Harms and Küchen, "Nachwort," p. 284); it could also indicate that Sambucus regarded the motto simply a part of the epigram, as he had done in his 1555 *Poemata* as well.

sitio et intelligentia. Nam et de moribus et natura et historica fabulosaque διὰ χαρακτηρισμῶν καὶ commode συνθημάτων finguntur.

(The pictures and images can be more correctly termed ‘symbola’, or ‘parasema’, (compare the word ‘*tesserae*’, ‘tokens’), although these terms are related and, just like ‘simile’ and ‘metaphor’, almost synonymous. While it is true that emblems can be designed as universal problems, yet, in the main, a threefold classification can be made. This also applies to their interpretation. For they are made (using distinctive marks and tokens), on topics drawn from human conduct, nature, and thirdly, from history and fiction.)²⁸

By translating the marker ‘autem’ as an antithesis to the preceding sentence, one might get the impression that Sambucus corrects himself and in fact prefers the term ‘symbol’ to ‘emblemata’. In the translations of Drysdall, this interpretation is dominant. With Scholer and Wesseling, I would rather read the passage as a side-remark, in which Sambucus clarifies the role of the pictorial element of the emblem.²⁹

This interpretation also makes the argument more comprehensible: it prevents the awkward question why Sambucus did not use the term ‘symbol’ instead of emblem, if he considers this more appropriate. In addition, the reading is supported by internal evidence. Later in his preface Sambucus declares that the emblem is not just any combination of common anecdotes with similar illustrations, thereby marking the emblem as consisting of both elements. In his emblems, Sambucus reserves the term ‘symbol’ for non-verbal, pictorial representations.³⁰ Thus, rather than interpreting the passage as a comment on the term ‘emblem’, it should be read as an attempt to stress the symbolic value of the picture. As he does in other places, Sambucus is here concerned with adding a more philosophical meaning to the pictorial element in his book. ‘Symbol’ was not only a respectable philosophical notion, but also a term used by Bocchi.³¹

²⁸ Sambucus, *Emblemata*, fol. A2ro.

²⁹ In the text the emphasis on the pictorial part of the emblem is marked by using the demonstrative ‘ipsae’. Cf. Scholer, “Ein Text hart wie ein Diamant,” pp. 108: “*Was nun die Darstellungen und Bilder selbst der Dinge anbelangt* [my italics], so können sie treffender als Sinnbilder oder Kennzeichen, gleichsam als Erkennungszeichen, bezeichnet werden.”

³⁰ Sambucus, *Emblemata*, fol. A2ro; for the use of the term symbol, see chapter 7, pp. 228–240.

³¹ About the relationship between Sambucus and Bocchi (dating back to 1555) see chapter one, pp. 13–14 and chapter four, pp. 125–126; Sambucus is included,

For any reader who tried to gauge the nature and status of Sambucus' book this reminiscence was a useful one. Thus, rather than presenting a technically precise terminology of the emblem, Sambucus situates it in its preferred literary and philosophical context.

Having introduced the term emblem, Sambucus indicates its thematic and interpretative scope by setting up two classifications. Similar to his treatment of the terminology, Sambucus presents an analysis in a systematic way, without actually providing logical clarity. In the first place he makes a division in three categories (*genera*): moral, natural, or 'historical' emblems. The last category (*historica fabulosaque*) includes both historical events and fictional stories, for example anecdotes taken from *exempla* literature. These fields operate as the natural reservoirs for emblematic themes. In the preface to the Dutch translation Gillis repeats them, extending the series with the categories of 'poëterie' and 'parable', thereby placing the emblem in a context familiar to the Dutch rhetoricians.³² The orientation on ethics and natural sciences will recur frequently in later emblem books, as is indicated for instance in the title of Nicolaus Reusner's collection *Emblemata [. . .] partim ethica et physica: partim vero historica, & hieroglyphica [. . .]* (Frankfurt on the Main, 1581), or Julius Wilhelm Zingref's *Emblematum ethico-politicorum centuria [. . .]* (n.p., 1619).

However, the theoretical status of the ordering in the preface is unclear. It does not contribute to a theory of the emblem, since the distinction between the three categories is not particularly clear. It is not, for instance, applied systematically in the main text of the book. On the contrary, the emblem book shows no visible sign of a special order.³³ Moreover, these categories do not distinguish the emblem from any other collection of epigrams. In short, the subject categories are clearly not intended as a normative emblematic model, in the style of some of the more recent contributions to emblem theory. It is therefore odd to see Homann concluding that this classification

as is Andrea Alciato, in the list of members and visitors of the Accademia Bocchiana, see Watson, *Achille Bocchi*, pp. 71–72, 152–153; a copy of Bocchi's work is listed in Gulyás, Monok, *Die Bibliothek Sambucus*, no. 1852.

³² See Porteman, "The Earliest Reception," pp. 37–46.

³³ As was mentioned in the previous chapter, Plantin determined for a large part the definitive appearance of the book. Changes in the order of the emblems in later editions, for example, seem to have had practical typographical reasons. See also chapter five about the subject-matter and structure of Sambucus' collection.

confirms Albrecht Schöne's requirement of 'potential facticity': it seems far-fetched to interpret, for instance, Sambucus' category of 'moralia' in the sense of "concrete or at least believed realities."³⁴

For the modes of interpretation of emblems Sambucus presents a categorisation that looks technically precise, but is equally noncommittal. He suggests that the emblem can be interpreted in the same way as fictional narrative, because the "commonplaces of both are the same."³⁵ Thus, "they can be expounded as myths, as rhetorical figures and as natural analogies." In this way Sambucus discerns three layers of interpretation that do not exclude each other. The relation between the particular modes of interpretation is not specified. Clearly, they are not of the same kind. A rhetorical reading will focus on formal aspects, such as the invention of the emblematic theme, the treatment of the *topoi*, and the use of figures. The interpretation based on natural science will be concerned with the allegorical reading of the book of nature. The meaning of the 'mythical' interpretation is not clear in itself. Scholer interprets it as referring to legends about gods and heroes.³⁶ The more general translation 'stories' by Wesseling corresponds to the explanation Homann presents.³⁷ In any case, this mode of interpretation as well as the one concerned with natural science requires allegory. This side of the emblem is, however, not explored any further. The emblem is simply

³⁴ Homann, *Studien*, p. 50: "Was nun die [...] zwei Förderungen (die der potentiellen Faktizität und der ideellen Priorität der *pictura*) betrifft, so findet sich bei Sambucus nur ein Hinweis auf die erstere, wenn er versucht, die emblematischen Bilder vom dargestellten Gegenstand her zu klassifizieren. [...] Dieser Klassifikation nach Stoffbereichen (*genera*) kommt keine große Bedeutung zu; sie ist traditionell und keineswegs Aufsehen erregend [...]. Sie zeigt jedoch sehr deutlich, daß Sambucus als Gegenstände der *picturae* konkrete oder doch wenigstens geglaubte Wirklichkeiten wenn nicht gerade fordert, so doch erwartet."

³⁵ Sambucus, *Emblemata* fol. A2ro.

³⁶ Scholer, "Ein Text hart wie ein Diamant," pp. 145–147.

³⁷ Homann's explanation (*Studien*, pp. 46–47) is based on the comparison of this passage to the emblem about the difference between history, rhetorics and dialectics ('Grammaticae Dialecticae Rhetoricae Historiae differentia' [121]). It is questionable whether the epigram of this emblem sheds any light on the passage in the preface. There is no reference to the term 'mythical' in the emblem. Apart from this, one could doubt the methodological validity of comparing the prose text in the preface (written from a different rhetorical perspective) to the epigram of the emblem. Compare Bernhard Scholz's remarks about the consequences of a different hermeneutic status in interpreting texts by Alciato in his "The 1531 Augsburg Edition of Alciato's *Emblemata*: A Survey of Research," *Emblematica* (1991), pp. 230–231.

located in the realm of allegorical literature. Rather than designing a model of the ideal emblem, Sambucus again links it to familiar literary practice.

Apart from situating the emblem within the literary landscape of the time, the classification also underpins its unity.³⁸ At first sight the large variety of emblematic subjects and forms may give the impression that the book is little else than an artificial collection of occasional poetry. Ordering the emblems according to subject and mode of interpretation suggests a coherence that legitimises the collection in its present form.

For the Eye and For the Ear

In his discussion of the combination of visual and verbal arts Sambucus adopts the same approach of positioning and legitimising the emblem. The most important goal of the emblem is didactic, according to Sambucus:

sed imprimis vitam ut historiae volo erudiant, ut, quemadmodum illae sunt philosophia ειδωλοποιός, ita haec in oculos notis quibusdam incurrant animumque auditoris agunto, quod non secus quam poesis τὸ σύνολον τὰ λήμματα μίμσις ἐστί.

(But they should teach above all a moral lesson, in my view, as historiography does: just as historiography is philosophy in the form of images, so emblems should strike the eye through characteristic marks and allure the mind of the hearer, since epigrams, just like poetry in general, are representations.)³⁹

Sambucus' intention here is a conventional expression of the Horatian ideal of combining the pleasant with the useful. In humanist debates about the value of poetry this argument had many times proven its strength.⁴⁰ Apart from this, by comparing the emblem to the historical anecdote, he situates his work among texts that are recognised to be useful.

³⁸ For the theme of unity as a way of value-enhancement in prefaces, see Genette, *Paratexts*, pp. 201–206.

³⁹ It seems to me that the plural of 'historiae' denotes the exempla used in historical literature; see also Homann, *Studien* p. 45 and Scholer, "Ein Text hart wie ein Diamant," pp. 125–129.

⁴⁰ Danilo Aguzzi-Barbagli, "Humanism and Poetics," in: Rabil, *Renaissance Humanism*, vol. 3: *Humanism and the Disciplines*, p. 104.

Expanding on the comparison with historical anecdotes, Sambucus explains how the emblems fulfil this moral end: just like these histories, characterized as a form of “philosophy in concrete images,” the emblems should strike the eyes and stimulate the mind as a form of artistic imitation of reality. In other words: by recreating reality in a sophisticated, symbolic way, the emblem teaches its audience profound moral truths.

It is not surprising to find a reference to the concept of imitation in this place: it is a central theme in sixteenth century poetics, which goes back to the classical literary theories of Plato and Aristotle. Poetry was distinguished from history by the fact that the former was a more profound imitation of reality. ‘Imitation’ could signify both copying and artistic creation. The influential Aristotelian concept of imitation (μίμῆσις) originally refers to the latter meaning. In Aristotle’s view the poet creates a new, universal reality. Hence, in his *Poetics* he shows a high esteem for the potential of poetry. Comparing the genres of historiography and poetry Aristotle judges the latter to be more philosophical and of greater importance. Whereas the historian’s task is to relate particular facts, the poet feigns a complete reality.⁴¹ In sixteenth-century commentaries on Aristotle’s *Poetics*, *imitatio* then became synonymous with fiction and the rhetorical concept of invention.⁴²

This concept of creative imitation is less prominent in that other classic poetical tract, Horace’s *Ars poetica*. One instance where it can be discerned, is the passage where Horace recommends the learned imitator to look at life and manners as an example before turning to writing dialogues: “I should direct the learned imitator to have a regard to the mode of nature and manners, and thence draw his expressions to the life.”⁴³ Combining Aristotelian and Horatian elements, theorists on imitation used to accentuate its creative force from the mid-sixteenth century onwards. This is reflected not only in Sambucus’ preface, but also in his emblem ‘Poetica’ (Poetry [46]), dedicated to Denys Lambin, where a personified Poetica is speaking (fig. 14):⁴⁴

⁴¹ Aristotle, *Poetics* 1451a36–1451b11.

⁴² Marvin T. Herrick, *The Fusion of Horatian and Aristotelian Literary Criticism, 1531–1555* (Urbana, 1946), pp. 28–38.

⁴³ “respicere exemplar vitae morumque iubebo / doctum imitatore[m] et vivas hinc ducere voces,” *Ars poetica*, lines 317–318, trans. C. Smart (New York, 1863).

⁴⁴ See also Wesseling’s interpretation of this emblem in relation to emblem theory, “Testing Modern Emblem Theory,” pp. 7–10.



Fig. 12. Poëtica explains herself to Denys Lambin and to other readers in 'Poëtica' (Poetry [46]).

Quidvis cum recitem, consector seria ludos;
 Nil est tamen proprium, imitor sed omnia.
 Et veris soleo ficta, his miscere vicissim
 Vera, ut queam pulchra esse serio et iocis.

(Although I rehearse whatever you please, pursue serious and playful things, yet nothing is my own, but I imitate everything. I am accustomed to mix fiction with truth and truth with fiction, so that I can be beautiful through serious matters and jokes.)

Imitation is connected here to fictional writing. Neither in this emblem nor in the preface does Sambucus explore the nature of imitation any further. Instead, he keeps aloof from all scholarly debate on this topic. There is no trace of the discussions between the Aristotelian and Horatian critics. He employs the term only in a general, conventional way to refer to poetry. Yet again, it seems that Sambucus' prime ambition was to link the emblem to the key notion of poetry, without losing the connection with history and philosophy.

From an Aristotelian point of view, though, it seems a bit odd to combine history and poetry as contributing equally to the emblematic goal of moral edification. With the theory of *mimesis* Aristotle made a clear distinction between poetry and history. In his *Poetics* and to a lesser extent also in Horace's *Art of Poetry* imitation was considered a poetic quality exclusively. In contrast to this, Sambucus regards history also as a narrator of a particular set of facts, without valuing it less than poetry. In his emblem on the difference between history, rhetoric and dialectic a similar appreciation of history can be seen:

Simplex historia est, lux, custos temporis atque
 Veri parens, quae gloriam tribuit bonis.
 Gratia non ducit, propriis affectibus obstat:
 Nil iudicans, alios relinquit iudices.
 Ordine simpliciter geritur quod narrat ab ovo
 [. . .]⁴⁵

(History is simple, a light, the guard of time and the mother of truth, who awards the good with fame. She is not guided by Favour, she resists her own emotions; judging nothing, she leaves that to others. She simply relates from the beginning what happens [. . .])

⁴⁵ The emblem is discussed in more detail in chapter seven, pp. 245–247.

Although history is clearly seen as little more than ‘simply’ relating facts, this does not make it less valuable. Similarly, Sambucus emphasises in the preface that the emblem consists of poetic and historical elements that should serve as a moral lesson.⁴⁶

As mentioned before, Sambucus describes historiography as “philosophy in images.” By characterising history as a combination of verbal and visual elements he alludes to the poetical principle of *ut pictura poesis*.⁴⁷ This concept, derived from Horace’s famous expression in the *Art of Poetry*, is closely connected to the theory of imitation.⁴⁸ In classical literature the same notion is also captured by Simonides’ in his maxim “painting is mute poetry” and “poetry a speaking picture.”⁴⁹ In humanist literary theory, Horace’s observation was usually interpreted as a poetic rule: let poetry be like a painting.⁵⁰ Through its combination of epigram and image, the genre of the emblem is almost automatically a reflection of this poetic concept. Sambucus responds to this notion, when he points to the effect of the emblem on the eye, the ear and the mind. The purpose of these media, however, remains an intellectual one: the picture is a didactic instrument to teach moral philosophy, it is a carrier of valuable concepts.

It is interesting to compare this philosophical approach to the combination of word and image to Gillis’ statements on the subject in the Dutch preface. Although Gillis also underlines the moral value

⁴⁶ Sambucus, *Emblemata*, fol. A2ro. For the use of historical anecdotes in Sambucus emblems, see chapter six, pp. 198–214.

⁴⁷ See Rensselaer W. Lee’s seminal study (from an art historical perspective) *Ut Pictura Poesis: The Humanistic Theory of Painting* (New York, 1967). For a literature-oriented treatment, see also Jean H. Hagstrum, *The Sister Arts. The Tradition of Literary Pictorialism and English Poetry from Dryden to Gray* (Chicago, 1958; reprint London, 1974).

⁴⁸ Horace, *Ars poetica*, lines 361–365 “Ut pictura poesis: erit quae, si propius stes, / te capiat magis, et quaedam, si longius abstes. / haec amat obscurum, volet haec sub luce videri, / iudicis argutum quae non formidat acumen; / haec placuit semel, haec deciens repetita placebit.”; “A poem is like a painting: the closer you stand to this one the more it will impress you, whereas you have to stand a good distance from that one; this one demands a rather dark corner, but that one needs to be seen in full light, and will stand up to the keen-eyed scrutiny of the art-critic; this one only pleased you the first time you saw it, but that one will go on giving pleasure however often it is looked at.” Trans. T.S. Dorsch, *Classical Literary Criticism* (Harmondsworth, 1965), pp. 91–92.

⁴⁹ Plutarch, *De gloria Atheniensium* 3.346 f–347 c; *Moralia* 5.402.

⁵⁰ Hagstrum, *The Sister Arts*, pp. 59–61.

of the pictures and intellectual challenge they set, he seems to be more practical in his approach to the emblem as a combination of two media. In his view, the *pictura* is the emblem and the text presents an interpretative key. However, without the text, the reader can still start interpreting himself. Thus, one emblem may also be interpreted in several ways, which, according to Gillis, is exemplified by the occurrence of the same *pictura* in two of Sambucus' emblems.⁵¹ However, this was in fact a mistake in the production, corrected by Plantin in subsequent editions. Evidently, the perspective of the reader is different from that of the producer of the emblem. A clearer example of how the reception of emblems can easily be mistaken for emblem theory is hardly possible.

Sambucus' emphasis on a vivid representation of reality, following from *mimesis* and *ut pictura poesis*, forms the background of the precepts summed up in the next section of the preface. I believe, however, this should not be read as a statement about the relative importance of the parts of the emblem. In poetry, a similar effect can be realised by visualising devices, like, for instance, extensive descriptions (*ecphrasis*) or a special, vivid style (*enargeia*, *efficacia*), which were frequently used in emblem epigrams, as we shall see in more detail in chapters five and seven. According to Quintilian *enargeia* makes the text seem to show rather than to narrate a particular scene, while the reader's emotions will be equally stirred as if he were present at the event.⁵²

Sambucus positions the emblem not only by describing its form and literary function, but also by formulating certain rules. Especially these parts of the text make it look like a poetical theory. We saw a first example of this in the opening paragraph when Sambucus almost casually remarks that questions are best avoided in emblems. The rationale behind this particular rule is not clear. In any case

⁵¹ To illustrate that one *pictura* can "easily be interpreted in two or three different ways" by using a different motto Gillis points at the double use of the *pictura* in 'Vel minima offendunt' (Even the small strikes, edn. 1564, p. 64) and 'Nihil negligendum' (Nothing should be neglected, *ibidem*, p. 205): "[. . .] waer mede men ooc lichtelick van een figure twee, dry, oft meer Emblemata van verscheyden sinne, ende nochtans al even goet maken can, ghelijc men sien mach dat hier int 46. ende 150. Emblema ghedaen is [. . .]"; see for Gillis' preface, fol. A4^{ro}. See also the facsimile reproduction by Voet and Persoons, *De Emblemata van Joannes Sambucus*, vol. 1, p. 19. See further chapter seven, pp. 223–224.

⁵² See Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria* 9.2.40–44.

Sambucus is not very strict in observing the rule in his own emblems.⁵³ A series of prescriptions on the preferred style is given later, following the definition of the emblem as a form of *mimesis* with a didactic function. Sambucus' rules, however, are not very practical guides. The precepts depend on qualitative criteria as 'just proportion', 'elegance' and 'obscurity.' Rather than being concrete guidelines, the rules serve as aesthetic characterisations, and as such help to form the image of the emblem aspired to.

Rhetorical Strategies

The elusive nature of Sambucus' observations on the emblem shows that the text can hardly be called a theory. Although Drysdall concluded before that Sambucus' preface does not present a theory, and Wesseling observed that the obscurity of the text was probably also a deliberate attempt to enhance its exclusive status, it has not led to a different approach of the text.⁵⁴ Unlike the French and Dutch preface, the special rhetorical context of the Latin preface has been largely neglected.⁵⁵

It is therefore useful to take a closer look at the function of the text. Obviously, it was meant to introduce the reader to the emblems, but along with this, it was also intended to impress its audience. This is reflected by the style in which the preface is written. Sambucus' use of technical vocabulary and complex arguments reminds of stylistic tricks Erasmus described in his *Praise of Folly*, satirising certain rhetoricians

who fancy themselves practically gods on earth if they can show themselves twin-tongued, like horse leeches, and think it a splendid feat if they can work a few silly little Greek words, like pieces of mosaic ['velut emblemata'], into their Latin speeches, however out of place these are. Then, if they still need something out of the ordinary, they

⁵³ See also chapter five; for questions as a structuring element esp. pp. 143–144.

⁵⁴ Drysdall, "Joannes Sambucus," p. 113; "Wesseling, "Testing Modern Emblem Theory," p. 4.

⁵⁵ Illustrative of this approach is the lack of attention to the last paragraph of the preface, concerned with presenting the book to the public. Wesseling omits this section from his edition, and Homann concludes his extensive summary of the preface with a brief paragraph of what he merely regards as a *petitio benevolentiae* (Homann, *Studien*, p. 47).

dig four or five obsolete words out of mouldy manuscripts with which to cloud the meaning for the reader. The idea is, I suppose, that those who can understand are better pleased with themselves, and those who can't are all the more lost in admiration the less they understand.⁵⁶

Similarly, it appears, Sambucus scatters erudite quotations throughout the text to impress the reader in equal measure as in his poems. The frequently complex sentences are furthermore larded with Greek phraseology. Scholer's argument that this is caused by the scholarly nature of the text would have been more convincing if Sambucus had really attempted to set up a systematic theory of the emblem.⁵⁷ As it stands, the Greek terms are primarily to be taken as deliberate signs of erudition.⁵⁸

Sambucus' main strategy was to convince his learned buyers of the respectability of this relatively new type of literature. The emphasis on the philosophical nature of the emblem should be seen in this light. From the first paragraph onwards Sambucus connects the emblem to moral philosophy. Right from the start the emblems are situated in the same context as philosophical problems. After this, Sambucus underpins their symbolical power in the second paragraph. Another connection with philosophy is made a bit further, in the comparison with historical anecdotes discussed before: emblems should exercise the mind as a form of exemplified philosophy, like history does.

The emphasis on the philosophical nature of the emblem can be seen as an *a priori* defence against accusations of banality. Sambucus is clearly eager to stress that the emblem should not be seen as a trivial form of amusement. By connecting the emblem to the world of moral philosophy, Sambucus provides the audience with arguments

⁵⁶ Erasmus, *Laus stultitiae*, IV.iii, lines 77–83, ed. Clarence H. Miller (Amsterdam, 1979): *Visum est enim hac quoque parte nostri temporis rhetores imitari, qui plane deos esse sese credunt, si hirudinum ritu bilingues appareant, ac praeclarum facinus esse ducunt latinis orationibus subinde graeculas aliquot voculas velut emblemata intertexere, etiam si nunc non erat his locus. Porro si desunt exotica, e putribus chartis quatuor aut quinque prisca verba eruunt, quibus tenebras offundant lectori, videlicet ut qui intelligunt, magis ac magis sibi placeant, qui non intelligunt, hoc ipso magis admirentur, quo minus intelligunt.*"; trans. Betty Radice, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 27 (Toronto, 1986), p. 88; also referred to by Wesseling, "Testing Modern Emblem Theory," p. 4.

⁵⁷ Scholer, "Ein Text hart wie ein Diamant," p. 73.

⁵⁸ Drysdall, "Joannes Sambucus," p. 113; Wesseling, "Testing Modern Emblem Theory," p. 47.

for the usefulness of the genre. This interpretation is supported by a few instances where Sambucus admits possible flaws of the genre or defends supposedly weak features: “the pictures themselves may be banal,” but, he insists, they convey “a hidden meaning.”⁵⁹

The extent to which these arguments are targeted to a particular readership, becomes again clear when Sambucus’ text is compared to the prefaces of Gillis and Plantin in the vernacular editions. Plantin, for example, throws his net considerably wider, claiming that apart from the sacred scriptures, no other ‘sorte de livres’ could serve more readers. In an impressive catalogue he subsequently specifies the different categories of reader he has in mind:

Premierement ceux qui aiment les lettres, ou la lecture de choses bonnes et utiles a la vie humaine y trouvent en quoy exercer leur industrie, et y profficter en la doctrine des meurs: les peintres et verriers de quoy remplir, orner, et enrichir leurs toilles, tableaux, parois, et verrieres; les orfebvres argentiers, graveurs et autres gens de marteau leurs bagues, ioyaux, vaiselles, armeures, targes, boucliers, planches et autres leurs ouvrages; les entrepreneurs d’edifices, tailleurs, et menuisiers leurs bastiments et menuiseries; les bordeurs, et tapisseries leur ornements, borderies, et tapisseries; et ce avec une bonne grace, et non moindre contentement du vulgaire ignorant, qui ne cherche en ces choses qu’une simple recreation de son oeil, comme des plus ingenieux, et mieux advisés, qui n’approuvent rien de quoy on ne puisse prendre instruction, et devenir tousiour milleur ou estre confirmé en l’exemple de quelque action vertueuse. (Voet-Persoons, II, p. 34)

In Gillis’ opening words we have already seen that the preface serves to influence the judgement of the readership for example by anticipating potential negative reactions. For Sambucus’ humanist readers, it appears that especially the images had to be defended against a potential critical response. Perhaps the woodcuts were suspiciously reminiscent of popular illustrated books in the vernacular. Earlier, Sambucus had already preferred the term ‘symbolum’ or ‘παράσημον’ for the *picturae*. This preference could also be seen as part of elevating the standing of the illustrations.

However, not only the *picturae*, but the epigrams as well are defended against possible criticism. According to Sambucus, the language used

⁵⁹ “Ipsa rerum simulacra si vulgaria sunt, abditum innuant sensum [. . .].” This strategy fits in well with the business policy of the publisher suggested in the previous chapter.

in these emblems is not and should never be a bad imitation (κακόζηλα), and the arguments nowhere improbable ἀπιθανά). As a purely poetic guide these rules are too imprecise to be helpful, but from a rhetorical point of view they are quite effective: ‘banal’, ‘bad’, ‘improbable’ are all indeterminate, but unequivocally pejorative terms. Clearly no reader could disagree with this expression of good taste.

A similar argument underpins the subtlety required in emblems. Sambucus repeatedly elaborates the precept that an emblem should neither be too easy to understand, nor too obscure. Particularly in the section with concrete examples, he makes his point for subtlety in an ingenious way. By enumerating images and subsequently labelling them as clichés, Sambucus appeals to the readers’ recognition of his judgement and at the same time promises to set his standards higher. In this way he can neutralise scepticism on the part of his readership and raise its expectations. To accommodate those readers who were still critical, Sambucus added a general apologetic clause at the end of the preface, where Sambucus calls upon the reader’s leniency in judging the book:

scio Platonem octuagesimo aetatis anno suos dialogos non deposuisse, sed ista dico, ut τούτων ἡμετέρων ὀκυτόκων dies fere totidem cum illorum annis conferam meisque incultis et ineptis veniam impetrem benignam. [. . .] Interea haec, lector, fidei pignorisque nomine habeto ac ut citius reliqua prodeant cum venia laudato.

(I know that Plato had not finished with his dialogues when he was eighty years old. I say this simply to compare the number of days which all my quick productions have taken with their years, and so that I may be pardoned for my crude ineptitudes. [. . .] Meanwhile, my dear reader, accept these in good faith and as a pledge, and speak kindly of them, so that the rest may appear the sooner.)⁶⁰

It is clear that composing the emblems in fact took Sambucus considerably longer than a few months. This display of the author’s (exaggerated) modesty was an essential part of decorum in prefaces such as this.⁶¹

Finally, Sambucus’ other aim with the preface is to present himself as a learned author to his readership. For a large part, this effect is

⁶⁰ Sambucus, *Emblemata* fol. A2vo., translation based on Drysdall, “Joannes Sambucus,” pp. 116–117.

⁶¹ Genette, *Paratexts*, esp. pp. 114–161.

realised indirectly as a consequence of the strategy of upgrading his work. The philosophical status of the genre, for instance, also endows the author with a certain intellectual respectability. The authorial perspective Sambucus applies in his text reinforces this effect. He presents his observations on the genre with a casual mixture of authority and learning, as if he were the obvious critic in this matter.

To this indirect way of presenting himself, Sambucus adds an explicit portrait of the ideal learned author of emblems. According to him, writing emblems requires an almost universal knowledge: “He who wishes to invent extraordinary things in the appropriate manner must be to some extent expert in everything [. . .].”⁶² This requires not only the appropriate use of images and language but also the ability to maintain a balance between philosophy and amusement. With this portrait in mind the reader is invited to appreciate the task of the author in intellectual terms.

After the sketch of a good emblem writer, Sambucus focuses on his predecessors and his own merit in this respect in the final paragraph. With conventional modesty, Sambucus first observes that it is not up to him to judge the work of his predecessors. However, in this *praeteritio* he seizes the opportunity to voice some criticism. According to him, some have been “carving out, cooking up and finally spewing forth” their emblems for forty long years.⁶³ He considers this a remarkable achievement of diligence, but behind the thin compliment, he barely hides his tedium. This criticism can hardly concern anyone else but Alciato, whose collection of emblems had constantly been expanded in the decades after its first edition. It is telling that Sambucus does not address the literary merits of his predecessor explicitly. He merely admires the diligence: “Nothing is achieved without effort.”⁶⁴

The mixture of modesty and assurance is also visible in his excuse for the quick production of his own emblems. As was shown, for this end he mentions the example of Plato. Whereas Alciato’s emblems

⁶² Sambucus, *Emblemata* 4: “Quamobrem in omnibus sit aliquantum versatus, qui apte παραδοξότερα comminisci velit [. . .].”

⁶³ “Caeterum quid hoc in genere argumenti adhuc quidam praestiterint, non meum est pronunciare, nec parum praestiterint oportet, quod quidam totos quadraginta annos sua cudant, coquant, denique extrudant, nec diligentiam vitupero, πόνου γὰρ χωρὶς εὐτυχεῖ [. . .].”

⁶⁴ “πόνου γὰρ χωρὶς εὐτυχεῖ [. . .].” is a quotation from Sophocles’ *Elektra* 945, see Scholer “Ein Text hart wie ein Diamant,” p. 193.

were revised and polished for forty years, and Plato even worked on his dialogues until he was well into his eighties, his own emblems were made within eighty days. But the benevolence he asks for is not only an expression of modesty. It also implies that possible flaws in his emblems are caused by the author's lack of time, not by his lack of talent. By mentioning Plato in this respect Sambucus places himself in the tradition of the greatest classical writers.

The self-assured modesty is continued till the end of the preface. On the one hand the collection of emblems is characterised as an early-born baby, which should be regarded with clemency. As was said earlier, in this way Sambucus could also forestall similar criticism from his readers. On the other hand, however, the display of modesty does not keep him from more ambitious statements. Sambucus concludes his introduction by presenting himself as a promising scholar once more. In the first place he announces new, "better and more serious" works. In the second place he raises the issue of the dedications in his emblems. At this preliminary stage Sambucus denies that the dedications in many of his emblems have anything to do with ambition. They are merely a form of "gratitude for the services and goodwill he received" from those famous men. As will be shown in the next chapter, though, there is ample reason to question Sambucus' sincerity in this case.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE USE OF DEDICATIONS*

In his emblem ‘Avaritia huius saeculi’ (The greed of this time [170]), Sambucus does not seem very content with the cultural climate of his time (fig. 15). In an echo of Martial he vents his irritation about the lack of financial support for the arts.¹ “Do not be surprised that there are so few poets in this time,” he remarks indignantly. “If there were Maecenases, new Virgils and Horaces would stand up,” he continues, “whereas now poetry lives in exile, unappreciated, and eloquence is snubbed everywhere.”²

This complaint seems somewhat misplaced in a collection dedicated to emperor Maximilian II, one of Europe’s important mecenases at the time (fig. 16). Sambucus’ subsequent remark that contemporary court life lacked fine arts would scarcely have been an effective way to curry favour.³ Apparently, Sambucus was not concerned for such a misunderstanding. Possibly he did not expect Maximilian to read many of the other emblems, at least not as a personal message. Quite a number of these were in fact addressed to others besides Maximilian. Of the 223 emblems, 87 bear a dedication, thus making up almost forty per cent of the collection.⁴ ‘Avaritia

* This chapter is a revised and expanded version of a paper presented at the Fifth International Conference of the Society for Emblem Studies, Munich, 9–14 August 1999. The paper has been published as ‘Name-Dropping and Networking. Dedications as a Social Instrument in the Emblems of Joannes Sambucus’ in: Wolfgang Harms, Dietmar Peil (eds), *Polyvalenz und Multifunktionalität des Emblems* (Bern, 2002), pp. 355–368.

¹ Martial, *Epigrammata* 8.55.

² “Desine mirari, cur saecula nostra poetas / Tam raros habeant: nil dat avara manus. / Si Maecenates fuerint, Flacci atque Marone / Existent [...] / Exulat ingratum carmen, facundia passim / temnitur [...]”.

³ At the end of the sixth distich: “cultis artibus aula caret.” For some striking documentation of dedication etiquette, see Craig Kallendorf, “In Search of a Patron: Anguillara’s Vernacular Virgil and the Print Culture of Renaissance Italy,” *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 91 (1997), 294–325.

⁴ For a list of all dedicatees, see appendix two. In two cases the emblems are addressed several people simultaneously: Markus and Johann Fugger [68], and the previously discussed emblem (see pp. 36–37) to the two kings of Hungary, ‘Virtus unita valet’ (Virtue is powerful when united [62]).



Fig. 13. Perhaps a more pessimistic variant of Alciato's stone, 'Auaritia huius saeculi' (The greed of this time [170]) addresses the difficulties in finding patronage for the arts.

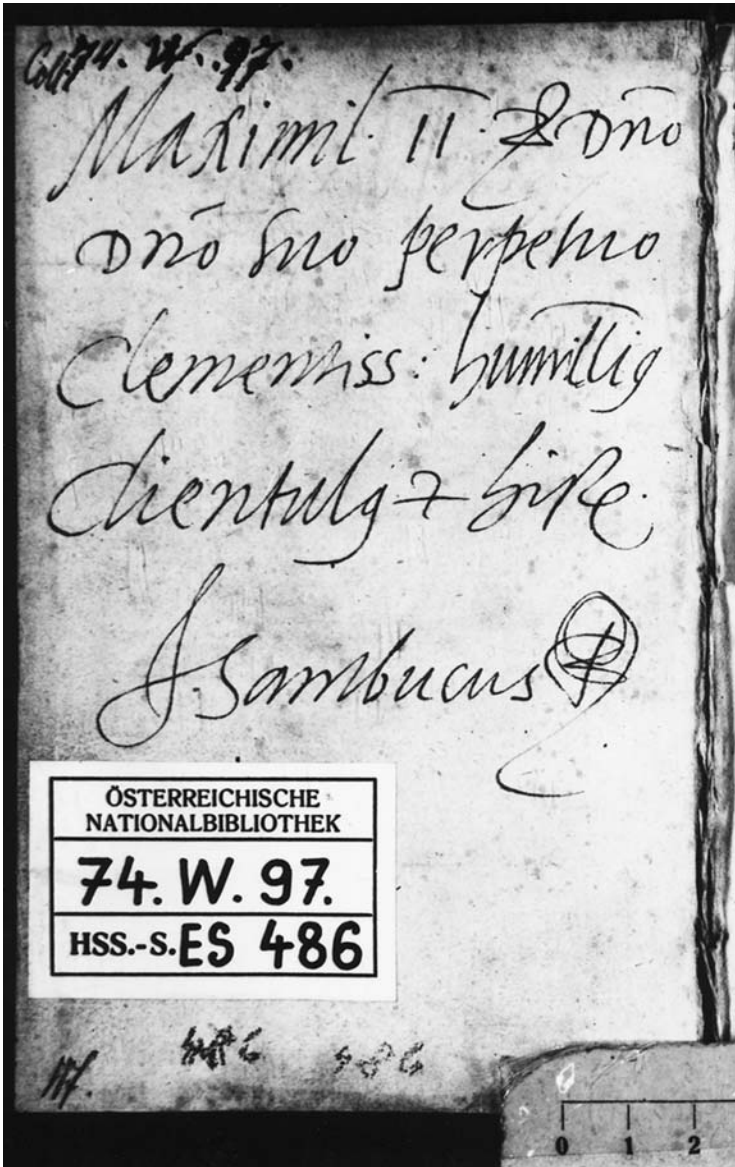


Fig. 14. Sambucus' inscription in the second edition of the *Emblemata* presented to the emperor by himself on 14 March 1568 (photo: Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna).

huius saeculi', for example, is dedicated to the French humanist Marc Antoine Muret (1526–1585), whom Sambucus had met during his stay in Italy in the mid 1550s.

The list of dedicatees represents persons from all over Europe, and includes the names of many celebrated humanists, such as Joachim Camerarius, Girolamo Cardano, Jean Dorat, Pietro Vettori and Petrus Ramus. A smaller number of names concerns influential courtiers, diplomats or politicians, such as Johann Khevenhüller (private secretary to the emperor), Philipp von Winnenberg (president of the imperial aulic council, the *Reichshofrat*), Leonhard von Harrach (*Obersthofmeister*), Johannes Listhy, Wolfgang Haller (both imperial secretaries), Johann Ulrich Zasy and Johann Baptist Weber (both imperial chancellors).

What, then, did Sambucus intend to achieve with dedicating the *Emblemata* to the emperor and, by extension, with individual emblems dedicated to various individuals? To what kind of persons did he dedicate and how did he use the emblems for these different personalities? In trying to answer these questions we can get a clearer picture of several social functions of the emblem.

Gifts, Ambition, and Gratitude

In the preface, Sambucus defends the inclusion of the dedications with a reference to his personal relationship with the men concerned:

Quod vero aliqua clarissimorum virorum nomina addiderim, non ambitiose factum putes: nec enim hos novi solum, qui omnem adhuc aetatem apud exteros traduxi, sed ut pro meritis, memoriaque et opinione de me publice scriptisque eorum testata, gratiam hac saltem occasione aliquam haberem, id vero spectavi [. . .]

(Do not think, if I have added some names of well-known men, it was out of ambition. For I have not only known these persons, having lived all my life among people of the world, but I sincerely meant to use this opportunity at least to show some gratitude for their services, their remembrance, and the good opinion of me they expressed in public and in their writings.)⁵

⁵ Sambucus, 'De Emblemate', fol. A2vo, trans., Drysdall.



Figs. 15 and 16a–b. An emblem was not only an elegant present, but could also be a useful one. ‘Conscientia mille testes’ (The conscience is worth a thousand witnesses [229]) dedicated to Johann Khevenhüller served as a model for the reverse side of a portrait medal of Khevenhüller by Antonio Abondio (photo of the medal: *Geld+Bankmuseum*, Utrecht).

This explanation is a revealing piece of prefatory diplomacy. By modestly denying ambition Sambucus in fact acknowledges that the dedications might have been interpreted as such. What is more, the gratitude Sambucus wishes to express to his inner circle of friends and colleagues is an explicitly public affair, prompted by feelings of obligation for previous services and patronage. As a consequence, the argument draws all attention to the author's reputation, by emphasising his personal acquaintance with the dedicatees, and the years he spent in the Republic of Letters. Thus, in spite of Sambucus' denial, the names of the dedicatees can still act as referees for his scholarly qualities. Although on the surface the passage seems to deny any social pretensions, on closer inspection it subtly manipulates the etiquette prevalent in the learned community. The underlying message is not without ambition and underscores that this book is written by a talented man of letters, who is highly conscious of his position.

The apology for the dedications, however, is not surprising, since the practice of dedicating was a common way for humanists to call upon wealthy patrons for support. The practice had been in use since antiquity, but the printing press had opened up new profitable, yet controversial possibilities.⁶ Books could now be offered to several persons at the same time, a practice gratefully adopted for instance by Erasmus.⁷ While he earned quite substantial sums of money with it himself, he mocks the similar practice of "a Dominican monk," who did the same with a massive psalter. "Since the work cannot be sold" he wrote in private correspondence, "he keeps going to distinguished persons to present it to them, thus selling it for much more than if he had been trading it."⁸ Sambucus does a similar

⁶ See Richardson, *Printing, Writers and Readers*, pp. 49–57 and Corinne Lucas, "Vers une nouvelle image de l'écrivain: *Della dedicazione de' libri* de Giovanni Fratta," in *L'Écrivain face à son public en France et en Italie à la Renaissance*, eds. Charles Adelin Fiorato and Jean-Claude Margolin (Paris, 1989), pp. 86–104; on gift giving and books see Natalie Zemon Davis, "Beyond the Market: Books as Gifts in Sixteenth-Century France," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, fifth series, vol. 33 (London, 1983), 69–88 and her *The Gift in Sixteenth-Century France* (Oxford, 2000), esp. pp. 59–61 and pp. 74–81.

⁷ Jean Hoyoux, "Les moyens d'existence d'Érasme," *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance*, 5 (1944), pp. 42–43.

⁸ "Opus quoniam vendi non potest, donat magnatibus obambulans, atque ita charius vendit quam si venderet." Erasmus to Cuthbert Tunstall, d.d. 22 October, 1518, [Allen, no. 886], quoted by Hoyoux, p. 33; also quoted and discussed by Davis, "Beyond the Market," p. 69.

thing with the *Emblemata*, by inserting a separate letter of dedication in the section with coins, addressed to the French treasurer Jean Grolier. He goes even further in a special presentation copy of Junius' Eunapius edition, where he had Junius' dedication replaced by his own to Maximilian.⁹

Of course, the dedication constituted more than a mere financial ploy. Perhaps even more often it was used as a way of paying tribute and showing affection to friends.¹⁰ The epigram, in particular, was traditionally a vehicle for personal tokens of friendship and admiration (and indeed of opposite gestures as well). The early modern concept of friendship, however, covers a broad range of relations, and did not exclude utilitarian aspects.¹¹ In fact, in the scholarly community the notion of friendship not only served to strengthen a shared identity, but also helped to sustain a system of knowledge dissemination and scholarly services.¹² Dedications, like other gifts and services (not necessarily material) were part of this system, without excluding the sincerest of intentions.

Moreover, also in a predominantly scholarly setting the language of dedications is permeated by hierarchy and concepts of gratitude and obligation, service and reciprocity, or their antonyms avarice and untrustworthiness. When, for instance, Sambucus received copies of Ortelius' atlas *Theatrum orbis terrarum* and his numismatic work *Deorum dearumque capita*, he responded that he felt "extremely grateful and heavily obliged," until he could "repay it with a greater favour." In this case, he started with sending a "modest counter-gift" of a golden ring with a carved stone.¹³ Apart from the exchange of information and gifts, Sambucus' letter shows no particular traces of patronage roles: Ortelius is simply addressed as "amico suo," and Sambucus discusses only topics of scholarship and collecting.

⁹ Gerstinger, *Die Briefe*, pp. 304–305.

¹⁰ Davis, "Beyond the Market," pp. 76–77.

¹¹ See Guy Fitch Lytle, "Friendship and Patronage in Renaissance Europe," in *Patronage, Art, and Society in Renaissance Italy*, ed. F.W. Kent and Patricia Simons (Oxford, 1987), pp. 47–61.

¹² Anne Goldgar, *Impolite Learning. Conduct and Community in the Republic of Letters, 1680–1721* (New Haven-London, 1995), pp. 12–26.

¹³ J.H. Hessels (ed.), *Abrahami Ortelii [. . .] epistulae* (Cambridge 1887, reprint Osnabrück, 1969), no. 44: "De Theatro, non vulgari, ut tu extumes munere, itemque deorum imaginibus te vehementer amo, habeoque gratiam, dum beneficio maiori redimam." and "Tibi vero nunc levidense δωρημάτων [. . .] ad studia, cogitationumque occupationibus usitato [. . .]."

In another instance, Sambucus rather humbly offers a list of philological comments to Pietro Vettori, which the latter might wish to publish “at the end of one of his works,” but if not, he apologises for seeming “ambitious.” When Vettori reacted positively, Sambucus was so glad, that he sent a golden coin in return, together with a deferential letter expressing his gratitude for this favour.¹⁴ Clearly, here hierarchy and ambition shine through the exchange of services and gifts between Sambucus and his Florentine colleague. It recalls the similar awareness of unequal positions in the emblem Sambucus dedicated to Vettori.¹⁵

Although Sambucus seems to have been the first to exploit the dedication of emblems on a European scale, the value of emblems as gifts was recognised from the start of the genre.¹⁶ Alciato dedicated his entire collection to the influential German humanist and politician Conrad Peutinger (1465–1547). He furthermore inscribed his first emblem to Maximilian, duke of Milan.¹⁷ Bocchi not only dedicated the collection as a whole to pope Julius III (and in another press run to his successor Paul IV), but also addressed a large number of his symbols to scholars, officials and clergymen. The majority of these dedications reflect the scholarly community of Bologna, but a number of important Italian humanists from other cities are also included.¹⁸ Yet another emblem writer, Hadrianus Junius, casually shares his plans for future dedications with Sambucus, classifying them apparently in order of importance. “I offer my edition of Nonius to his majesty the emperor,” he starts, “the *Emblems* to our treasurer, the epigrams to various persons; the *Nomenclator* to the son

¹⁴ Gerstinger, *Die Briefe*, no. xxvi, pp. 88–92, containing the list of suggestions, and no. xxviii, pp. 95–96 (offering the coin).

¹⁵ See chapter one, pp. 6–9.

¹⁶ For a broad exploration of the different social settings in which emblems were made, see John Manning, *The Emblem*, esp. pp. 185–274.

¹⁷ Apart from these dedications, one of Alciato’s emblems is dedicated to Alciato by Aurelius Albutius, summoning him to leave the Italian instability for a professorship in France.

¹⁸ For the dedications in Bocchi, see Anne Rolet, *Les Symbolicae Quaestiones d’Achille Bocchi (1555): Recherche sur les modèles littéraires, philosophiques et spirituels d’un recueil d’emblèmes à l’époque de la Réforme. (Édition, traduction, et étude d’ensemble)*, 4 vols. [unpublished PhD thesis] (Poitiers, 1998), vol. 2, pp. 575–641 and idem, “Achille Bocchi’s *Symbolicarum quaestionum libri quinque*,” in Enenkel and Visser (eds), *Mundus Emblematicus*, pp. 105–106.

of another ruler—I have not yet decided who.”¹⁹ Junius stuck to his plan. The emblems were indeed dedicated to the treasurer of the County of Holland, Arnoldus Cobelius. The letter addressed to Cobelius opens by situating the booklet in the ancient tradition of new-year’s gifts, the *strenae*. In addition, he dedicated a third of his 58 emblems to other individuals, mainly politicians and diplomats of the central government in the Low Countries in Brussels. Just like Sambucus he also included another dedication in the separate *Aenigmata* section, addressed to the jurist Arnoldus Rosenbergus.²⁰

In two interesting cases we have more explicit information about how the use of dedications was perceived by emblem writers. Firstly, Pierre Coustau takes a critical stand by carping opportunistic flattery in the dedicatory letter to his brother. Apparently, the authors of these dedications think they present “a horn of plenty,” he sneers, that they “establish something authoritative” with it, or perhaps that they honour the style practiced by the ancient historiographer and notorious flatterer Aristobulus.²¹

Nicolaus Taurellus, however, openly explains how the publication of his *Emblemata* was made possible due to the financial contributions of the dedicatees. Having received positive reactions to the manuscript version, Taurellus soon discovered that a publication would be too expensive for him. Enthusiastic readers suggested each to bear the cost of one emblem, to be recognised by a dedication. In grateful return, Taurellus offers them to choose their favourite emblem, and to have their coat of arms included.²²

¹⁹ Hadrianus Junius, *Epistolae* [...] (Dordrecht: V. Caimax, 1552 [= 1652]), p. 385, letter from Junius to Plantin, May 1564 “Nonnium Caesareae Majestati destino. Emblemata Quaestori nostro; Epigrammata diversis; Nomenclatorem Principis alicuius filio, quod nondum satis constitutum habeo. [...]” The editions mentioned are the polyglot dictionary *Nomenclator* (Antwerp: C. Plantin, 1567), eventually dedicated to Prince Philip William of Orange, and Nonnus Marcellus, *De proprietate sermonum* [...] (Antwerp: C. Plantin, 1565).

²⁰ For the preface, see Junius, *Emblemata*, fol. A2ro; see furthermore Heesakkers, “Hadriani Junii Medici Emblemata (1565),” in Enenkel-Visser (eds.), *Mundus Emblematicus*, pp. 43–47.

²¹ Pierre Coustau, *Pegma, cum narrationibus philosophicis* (Lyons: M. Bonhomme, 1555), fols. a111ro–vo: “Quod opinor existiment se κέρασ ἀμαλθείας dare, aut κρῖον aliquod fundere, aut forte vineam Aristobuli in templo Iovis consecrare.” (fol. aiiiio); “Quae est igitur illa in dedicandis libris tam insolens praedicatio?” (fol. a111vo).

²² I am grateful to Jeanine De Landtsheer for this reference; Nicolaus Taurellus, *Emblemata physico-ethica, hoc est, naturae morum moderatricis picta praecepta.—Editio secunda* (Nuremberg, 1602), fols. A5vo–a7ro.

What to think, then, of the rationale behind the substantial number of dedications in the emblems of Sambucus? In a letter about the financial rewards for authors Ortelius offers some intriguing suggestions. In trying to answer his nephew's questions about what was appropriate in these matters, he first indicates, as we have seen before, that printers seldom paid money for manuscripts, but sometimes offered some presentation copies. Authors did however "often expect some reward for the dedication from a generous mecenas or patron," but "often and in most cases" this failed. Then Ortelius gives the examples of Adolphus Occo's book of ancient coins and Sambucus' *Emblemata*, in which both cases the authors had to pay for the publication. However, Ortelius admits that these works may not be useful examples, since they were written by the authors "on their own accord, as a favour to themselves or their patron, and that for various reasons, either for the sake of honour or to acquire friends, or to receive remuneration from their patron, or to earn a reputation (for which reason many fools write books nowadays)."²³

Although Ortelius does not specify which combination of motives he thinks were behind the respective cases of Occo and Sambucus apart from yet other conceivable options, the letter makes an exciting start for a more detailed analysis of the relationship between Sambucus and the particular dedicatee.

The network of Sambucus' friends and colleagues has received quite substantial attention, mostly as part of straightforward biographical studies.²⁴ I would like to build on this research by making some preliminary classifications of his network as represented in the *Emblemata*. On the basis of that, I shall further explore two particular social functions of the dedications in the remainder of this chapter.

²³ Ortelius to Emanuel van Meteren, Hessels (ed.), *Abraham Ortelii Epistolae*, no. 148, p. 343: "Want dese hebben alle proprio motu, et sibimet, aut suo generis indulgentes, aut honoris, aut parandi amici, aut remunerationis a moecenati, vel ad nomen parandum, (daer veel sotten boecken om schryven hedensdaechs)."

²⁴ In these cases the dedications are usually seen as testimonies of disinterested friendship. See for, instance, Emerico Várady, "Relazioni di Giovanni Zsámboke," p. 25; Bach, *Un humaniste hongrois*, p. 18 and pp. 33–34. Bach admits that there is not always proof for Sambucus' assertion that the dedicatees knew him personally, but is convinced of the author's honesty: "Le ton de gratitude réelle doit nous convaincre, même quand nous n'avons pas d'autres preuves [...]." Varga similarly interprets the emblems as unequivocal testimonies of the historical relations with the dedicatees in "Quibusnam cum viris," 99–115. Gerstinger, *Die Briefe*, p. 14; August Buck, "Leben und Werk des Johannes Sambucus," pp. 8–12.

Composition of Sambucus' Network

As we have seen with Sambucus, it is a hazardous undertaking to put sixteenth-century persons in neat categories of professions, disciplines and social positions. Many of the dedicatees were engaged in several professional activities simultaneously and did not lead static lives but developed their careers constantly. Still, the larger part of the list of dedications is probably set up in a fairly restricted period, from the end of the 1550s until about 1562.²⁵ Thus, it reflects Sambucus' social awareness of that period in his life. The new dedications in the expanded editions of 1566 and later must date from the period between 1564 and 1566 and are indicative of the new setting in which Sambucus then lived.

Altogether, the lion's share (about 60 per cent) concerns fellow members of the scholarly community, while the remaining number is devoted to influential courtiers and clergymen.²⁶ Three other emblems are addressed to (future) family members: his father Petrus Sambucus, his brother-in-law Joannes Panithy and his future father-in-law Coloman Egerer.

It is possible to get an impression of the evolution of Sambucus' network by analysing the different stages of the list of dedicatees and by comparing it with those in Sambucus' previously published book of epigrams, *Poemata quaedam* (Padua, 1555). The dedications in the *Poemata* reflect Sambucus' activities as a private teacher and student

²⁵ Several of the dedicatees had died several years before the first edition was published, for instance Bartolomeo Marliani (†1560) and Achille Bocchi (†1562), which may be seen as a *terminus antequem* for the composition (or possibly Sambucus was not aware of the death of his dedicatees). The death of Lotichius in 1560, however, is remembered with an epitaph.

²⁶ Of course, it is not always possible to make a clear distinction between these categories. With due reservations, therefore, I present a list of those who seem to have been chosen for their social or political influence, rather than as members of the humanist community (in alphabetical order): Andreas Báthory; Hieronymus Beck; Christophorus Carreta; Juraj Draskovic; Coloman Egerer; Ferenc Forgách; Johann Jakob Fugger; Markus and Johann Fugger; Stephano Gentile; Wolfgang Haller; Leonard von Harrach; György Hosszúthoty; Johann Khevenhüller; Joannes Listhy; emperor Maximilian II; Nicolaus Olah; Kaspar von Breunner; Bartolomeo Romoli; Julius Graf zu Salm; Johann Andreas von Schwambach; Anthonius Verantius; Johann Baptist Weber; Philipp von Winnenberg; Johann Ulrich Zasy; Joannes Zermegh; Christoph Philipp Zott von Pernegg. Furthermore, two emblems are dedicated to family members, his father Petrus Sambucus and his brother in law Joannes Panithy. The epithalamium to Joannes Ambius and Alba Rollea falls outside this categorisation.

in Padua, and the circle of (Hungarian) friends he frequented in during the years 1553–1555. Some other poems are addressed to former German teachers. Eleven of these would recur in the *Emblemata*.²⁷ The *Poemata* bears no trace of the intellectual elite in Paris, for instance Ramus, Du Hamel, or Lambin, who will receive an emblem later. Perhaps Sambucus had not established personal contact with them during his first stay in Paris in the early 1550s.

A marked shift in the dedication strategy can be observed in the new emblems included in the second edition. The ratio of dedications increases considerably, a substantial number of which concern high-ranking courtiers and officials. Thus, of these 55 emblems, no less than 32 have a dedication, of which 19 are not related to the scholarly community. This is of course a direct consequence of Sambucus' new position at court, but it also shows that he considered the emblem a useful instrument for this setting.

The forms of address provide some initial information as to how Sambucus perceived the relationship between himself and the dedicatee. The adjective 'generous' is probably the clearest indication that Sambucus addressed a patron who had given some financial support or was expected to do so in the future.²⁸ The lack of this flattering epithet, however, does not rule out that such a relation existed in other cases. Certain forms of address were required in view of the dedicatee's position. Thus the six bishops in the list were addressed as such, with their see added to their name, and similarly the functions of many courtiers were specified.²⁹

In most cases, however, when addressing a fellow humanist no extra form of address is added. In a few cases an added 'suo' or 'suum' betrays a closer relationship with the dedicatee (Arnoldus Monoxylus, Fulvio Orsini, Christopher Plantin and Michaël Sophianus). More often, however, some extra information is given on the disciplinary background of the dedicatee, such as 'medicus' (Joannes

²⁷ In alphabetical order: Philippus Apianus; Joachim (I) Camerarius; Ferenc Forgách; Nicolaus Istvánffy; Paulus Manutius; Nicolaus Oláh; Joannes Panithy; Franciscus Robortellus; Petrus Sambucus; Johann Sturm and Hieronymus Wolf.

²⁸ Used in the emblems dedicated to Markus and Johann Fugger, Leonard von Harrach and Kaspar Baron von Breunner.

²⁹ The bishops included are Paulus Bornemissa, bishop of Transylvania, Juraj Draskovic, bishop of Pécs, Andreas Dudith, then bishop of Tinin (Knin), Ferenc Forgách, bishop of Vác, Anthonius Verantius, bishop of Eger and archbishop Nicolaus Oláh.

Aicholtz, Joannes Goropius Becanus and Hadrianus Junius) or ‘i[uris] c[onsultus]’ (Joannes Tonner and Bartolomeo Romoli).

The lack of more explicit information in the emblem book about the relations between dedicatee and author could only be compensated by a broader, systematic analysis of other sources, in particular correspondence. That would also shed light on the selection of dedicatees. Why, for instance, did Sambucus not devote an emblem to Ortelius? Without trying to solve these problems, I shall here focus on two particular purposes of dedications in the emblems: in the first place the dedication as an instrument to create and maintain relations, and in the second place the dedication as part of a strategy of reputation building. This latter function was directed not so much at the addressee, as at the broader readership.

Timing

It is important to realise that the publication of the *Emblemata* came at a crucial moment in Sambucus’ career. Sambucus still had to make his mark at the Habsburg court. Although he was becoming an experienced member of the Republic of Letters, as yet he had no clear and secure position.

For example, Sambucus had fostered ambitions to become librarian of the imperial library in Vienna for quite some time. Since his first, minor, appointment at the Habsburg court in 1557, he had been engaged in collecting manuscripts and exploring the Imperial collections. In 1564, in his dedicatory emblem to Maximilian II, Sambucus already alludes to this ambition by presenting himself as an ideal scholar-poet for the Habsburg court. He presents himself to the emperor as a useful employee. He promises, for instance, to magnify the imperial glory by writing an epic and by collecting more ancient treasures and old manuscripts. The collection of emblems was proof of Sambucus’ experience in both poetic and scholarly matters. As we have seen, in the end Hugo Blotius, and not Sambucus would become librarian by 1575, but ten years before that, the emblem book can be seen as a way of applying for an appropriate position at the Habsburg court.³⁰ The copy Sambucus presented to

³⁰ See chapter one, pp. 23–28.

the emperor is still kept in the *Nationalbibliothek* in Vienna. It is luxuriously bound and bears a personal inscription by the author.³¹ If this is seen as a courtly application procedure, the dedicatees can perhaps be regarded as references who lent their reputation to strengthen that of Sambucus.

Thus, the contacts he had made in his *peregrinatio academica* were instrumental in achieving a good reputation, which was vital for Sambucus to achieve anything. Therefore, let us first consider how exactly the dedications were applied in the emblems as instruments for networking.

The Creation of a Network

Some of the dedicated emblems contain explicit references to the dedicatee. In all the dedicated emblems, of course, the motto is followed by a name and sometimes a more intimate address beneath, but in about one third of these the dedicatee is also referred to in the epigram.³² This integrated use of the dedication in the emblem is a relatively new feature in the history of the genre. Neither Alciato nor one of the French predecessors adopted this procedure. However, Sambucus was not completely original: his model in this respect is Bocchi's book of symbols where this use of dedications is common practice. In the next chapters dealing with the epigrams in particular we shall come back to the relation between Bocchi and Sambucus and discuss some examples of this practice in more detail, as for example the pun on the title of Baron in 'Fatuis levia committito' (Entrust to fools the trivial things [226]), dedicated to Leonard von

³¹ Sig. 74 W 95, Rara 5. The manuscript dedication: "Maximiliano II. Romanorum Imperatori Augusto Germaniae Hungariae, Boemiaeque Regi potentiss: Archiduci Austriae, Duci Burgundiae, Comiti Tyrolis [. . .] benignissimo, atque clementissimo dicavit hoc Emblematum opusculum Joannes Sambucus Tirnaviensis, Infimus eius M[aiesta]tis cliens perpetuae et constantis obedientiae ergo, istudque exemplum obtulit MDLXIII, 26 Septembr[is] Viennae."

³² This concerns 25 cases. The names of these dedicatees are indicated in italics in appendix two. Excluded from this number are the dedicatory emblem to Maximilian, the epithalamium to Ambius and Rollea, and two emblems, 'Mixtus status οὐκ ἄνευ ἄρχοντος πρώτου' (A mixed constitution cannot do without a prime leader) and 'Mathiae Corvini Symbolum, Symbolo Ioan. Regis auctum' (Symbols of Matthias Corvinus and king Joannes), that address the emperors Ferdinand and Maximilian in the epigram only, without a dedication beneath the motto.

Harrach, and the emblem dedicated to Girolamo Cardano about Timon the misanthrope [107]. In the latter case, Sambucus not only uses the ambiguous nature of melancholy to mark the genius of Cardano, but furthermore invites him to publish his dialectics, which he had once given to Sambucus. It is interesting to see that Sambucus did not simply thank Cardano; he wanted to suggest (or create) a relationship in which services could be exchanged on a more regular basis.

Similarly, an interesting example for the history of the emblem is ‘Dum potes vive’ (Live while you can [67]) dedicated to Achille Bocchi (fig. 17). Bocchi is here addressed with the words “To Achille Bocchi, as to his father, on the cuttlefish” (Ad Achillem Bochium, tanquam parentem, de sepia).

The epigram tells about the ability of the cuttlefish to escape from a fisherman by darkening the colour of the water with his ink.³³ However, the text proceeds, man cannot escape from death. Therefore, Bocchi should publish his works as monuments to his talent.³⁴ Apart from this exhortation, which works in the same way as in the example of Cardano, the phraseology of the dedication is striking: Sambucus likens Bocchi to his father. This not only hints at Bocchi’s influence as an emblem writer, in sharp contrast to that of Alciato, but it also implies a personal relationship.

In these three cases, not much is known about the relationship Sambucus had with the dedicatee. For now, it will suffice to observe that Sambucus uses the emblem to establish or at least to suggest, an interactive relationship with the dedicatee.

Concrete reasons for this type of networking are mostly difficult to trace. Evidently, the background of the dedicatee can provide useful clues. As respectable members of the Republic of Letters, both Cardano and Bocchi were a useful contact for Sambucus in scholarly matters. Von Harrach, however, was an influential courtier from Vienna, who might prove to be a convenient connection in Sambucus’ life at court.

³³ For a short report on the use of the cuttlefish in emblems, see Lubomír Konečný, “An antiphilosophical emblem by Giulio Cesare Capaccio,” *Society for Emblem Studies Newsletter* 23 (July 1998), 5–8.

³⁴ “Tu qui praestiteris tantum, possisque, libenter / Ingenii nobis des monumenta tui.”



Fig. 17. Sambucus about the cuttlefish, in his emblem for Achille Bocchi, 'Dum potes vive' (Live while you can [67]).

Together with other external information the background of the dedicatee can help to reconstruct the social function of the emblems. Two emblems to dedicatees from different milieus may illustrate this. The first case, the emblem ‘*Usus libri, non lectio prudentes facit*’ (The use, not merely reading makes experts [56], fig. 10) is dedicated to the Roman librarian and collector Fulvio Orsini and deals with a thoroughly humanist issue: the use of learning.³⁵

In the epigram of this emblem the first four distichs deal with the need to apply knowledge from books. Merely *reading* books is not enough. These lines are followed by three more distichs addressed to Orsini in person. In this section, Sambucus writes:

Id quoniam recte noras, doctissime Fulvi,
 Imprimis veteres te erudiere libri.
 Horum tu numerum insignem rarumque tueris,
 Ingenio multos restituisque libros.
 Id quoque delectat Sambucum et tota vetustas:
 Prosimus quibus est copia forte minor.

(Because you know this well, most learned Orsini, above all, the old books have made you wise. You keep a remarkable and rare number of these, and with your talent you recovered many books. This also pleases Sambucus, as does the whole of Antiquity. Let us be of help to those who may have less abundance of means and talent.)

Orsini is praised for his wisdom, his library and his editions. The edifying message of the emblem is not addressed to him. On the contrary, Orsini is an example of a generally correct moral disposition. Sambucus praises this and emphasises that both and Orsini he are of the same opinion. This is made explicit by the sentence in which Sambucus mentions his own name. In this way he not only gives a compliment to Orsini, but also includes himself in the same category (Let us).

Whether there was a form of personal affection to the friendship or not, it is certain that there was a utilitarian side to the relationship. This becomes clear in a letter from Sambucus to Orsini, dating from 1563. Here Sambucus remarks almost casually, that the emblems are forthcoming, and that some of these “will also carry

³⁵ About Orsini, see Pierre de Nolhac, *La bibliothèque de Fulvio Orsini. Contributions à l'histoire des collections d'Italie et à l'étude de la Renaissance* (Paris, 1887).

your name, as you will see soon.”³⁶ At the end of the letter, Sambucus asks Orsini to introduce him to cardinal Ranuccio Farnese, Orsini’s employer.

The second example, ‘Modulo te tuo metiri’ (Measure yourself according to your own measure [243]), is dedicated with a pun on the name of the addressee “ad egregium virum Collimanum Egerer Viennensem” (to the distinguished gentleman Coloman Egerer of Vienna), a wealthy local merchant (fig. 18).

The epigram recommends a virtuous life in accordance with one’s possessions and circumstances. This advice is illustrated by the behaviour of the partridge, the quail and the pheasant: conscious of their physical incapacities, they are content with breeding on earth, and leave the air to others. In the final distich Egerer is complimented on his own way of life:

Hoc quoque tu spectas, qui posses grandia quaeque;
Impositum curas sed bene tutus onus.

(You also bear this in mind, although you are capable of any great thing, but as a secure man you take good care of the burden imposed upon you.)

The relationship between Sambucus and Egerer is not explained by the emblem. In fact, with the breeding metaphor the epigram is perfectly appropriate in this case: about one year later, in August 1567, Sambucus married Christina Egerer which made Coloman Egerer Sambucus’ father-in-law.³⁷ It was an excellent match for Sambucus. It secured his financial position, which would otherwise not have been sufficient to maintain his collecting activities.³⁸ It is not clear when the preparations for the marriage had started, and hence the exact role of the emblem in making Egerer’s acquaintance is hard to pin down. However, the emblem was obviously one of the instruments Sambucus had to gain the merchant’s good graces.

³⁶ Gerstinger, *Die Briefe*, p. 68, no. xiii: “Ego a discessu ex Urbe aliquot Menses Antverpiae haesi, istic dilalogos [sic] de imitatione a Cicerone petenda, in artem poeticam et Emblematum 200 praelo subdidi, et de his quaedam nomen quoque tuum praeferent, quae propediem videbis.”

³⁷ A transcription of the contract of marriage, see Anton Vantuch, *Ján Sambucus*, pp. 225–226. See also the invitation letter d.d. 10 July 1567 to the magistrates of the city of Trnava, Gerstinger, *Die Briefe*, ‘Anhang’, pp. 336–337, no. viii.

³⁸ About the economic significance of marriage, see also the case of Blotius, whose revealing correspondence about his two marriages is described by Brummel, *Twice ballingen’s lands*, pp. 53–60.



Fig. 18. A compliment for his future father-in-law: 'Modulo te tuo metire' (Measure yourself according to your own measure [243]).

It is obvious that the lines devoted to Orsini and Egerer are intended to be complimentary. They constitute not only a personal token of appreciation, but also a service rendered by the author. Their respective reputations are enhanced by the dissemination of Sambucus' emblem book. However, the compliments are not without self-interest. In the case of Orsini, the name of Sambucus is mentioned on a par with that of the Italian humanist. In this way Sambucus also presents himself as prominent member of the network. This is in accordance with the procedure followed by Sambucus in the preface, when he declared all famous dedicatees friends whom he had known personally. In the case of Egerer, the prospects of marrying the daughter of the dedicatee may have played their part. In general, the dedications to influential courtiers added in the later editions can also be interpreted in the light of this strategy of networking. They are not only a reflection of Sambucus' new social environment, but also mirror the position he aspired to at the court in Vienna.

Name-Dropping

The networking activities that Sambucus displays in his emblems constitute only one aspect of the use of the dedications. Apart from establishing an interactive relationship with some of the dedicatees, it was also Sambucus' strategy to present these contacts to a wider audience, through the publication of the emblem book. The names of famous dedicatees in the emblems could make a distinct impression on the readership.

In fact, the practice of dedicating can in most cases be set apart from the invention of the emblem. 'Principum negligentia' (Negligence of rulers [187]), for instance, is dedicated only at a later stage to Joachim Camerarius, the father of the later emblem writer. In the first edition the emblem about the blind Cyclops Polyphemus as an emblem of erratic leadership shows no dedication at all.³⁹ The two

³⁹ Together with the dedication, four additional lines are inserted in the epigram, addressing Camerarius in person: "Haec te vix melius quisquam moderatius una / Scriptis nunc merito quemque monere solet. / Crassus ego tetros fugiendos semper abusus / Censeo, sed veterum cuncta levanda nego"; see the full text of the epigram on pp. 143–144; for its religious message, see pp. 30–32. In the 1566 edi-

distichs Sambucus added to address Camerarius personally are not an indispensable part of the emblem itself. Sambucus did not compose the emblem for Camerarius, but adapted it at a later stage.

For the majority of readers, it seems, the relationship between the dedicated emblems and the dedicatee would not be clear. In most cases, the author makes no attempt to establish an interactive relationship and the dedication beneath the motto was often the only clue. Moreover, it is unlikely that these dedicatees were all well-known to the general reader. It is significant, therefore, to note that Sambucus usually provides further information. This could be about the dedicatee's profession or his relation to Sambucus. The emblems dedicated to his father Petrus Sambucus, his brother-in-law Joannes Panithy and Achille Bocchi are good examples of the latter category. Of the former kind, a few examples should be mentioned.

As said before, some of the names of humanists are accompanied by a further specification about their professional activities. Hubertus Goltzius, for example, is addressed as 'antiquarian'⁴⁰, Wolfgang Lazius as 'polyhistor', and Hadrianus Junius is called 'a brilliant physician' ('*medicus clarissimus*'). Furthermore, many noblemen and clergymen are named with their proper forms of address.⁴¹ Such epithets indicate that the dedications were used in the public sphere. They may be tokens of gratitude towards the persons in question, as Sambucus suggests, but they communicate more than formal gratitude. The dedications also reflect a social world Sambucus wishes himself to connect with.

Against the background of the contexts provided in this and the previous chapters we will now look more closely at the literary characteristics of the emblems. In our discussion of the preface, it has been argued that contemporary theory should be separated from the

tion the emblem is presented as a dialogue to Camerarius. A similar case is 'Ordo' (Order), from the second edition onwards dedicated to Johann Sturm and provided with an extra distich to Sturm. Furthermore, in 'Fides non apparentium' (Faith in what is not manifest), dedicated to Michael Brutus, from the second edition onwards an extra distich is added with a pun on the name of Brutus. Similarly in 'Virtutem honor sequitur' (Honour follows virtue), dedicated to Anthonius Verantius, two extra lines are added with a personal address.

⁴⁰ For the relation between Sambucus and Goltzius see also Waterschoot, "Johannes Sambucus und die niederländischen Numismatiker."

⁴¹ See for example the emblems dedicated to Juraj Draskovic, Ferenc Forgách, and Anthonius Verantius.

study of the poetical practice. The same holds true for modern emblem theory, which is automatically based upon a general view of centuries of emblem production. In our approach to the emblems we will not take our starting-point from any specific idea of the emblem as a coherent entity of text and picture. Instead, the historical order of composition will determine the arrangement of this investigation. First the subject-matter, structure and style of the epigrams will be considered. Sambucus' use of classical sources is the subject of chapter six. Finally, an assessment will follow of the relation between word and image in the emblems in chapter seven. Although the separate treatment of the epigrams may occasionally seem to neglect the specific character of the emblem, it appears to be the best way to avoid drawing conclusions that were in fact prompted by modern knowledge and expectations of the genre.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE EPIGRAMS: SUBJECT-MATTER, STRUCTURE AND STYLE

The fact that Sambucus presented himself as a *poeta doctus* and a respectable man of letters, rouses certain expectations with regard to his actual poetry. In this chapter, the subject-matter, structure and style of Sambucus' epigrams will be assessed against the background of the cultural and literary setting we discussed before. In doing this, his work will be compared to that of Alciato and Bocchi, his most important predecessors. This is in a way suggested by Sambucus himself, when he implicitly reveals his aversion from the emblems of Alciato in his preface and elsewhere addresses Achille Bocchi as his father.¹ This may suggest that Sambucus preferred the Bocchian symbol to Alciato's type of emblem. We shall therefore also try to establish whether this is merely lip service, or also a reflection of Sambucus' implicit poetics.

In this assessment, we will concentrate on the epigram in isolation from the pictures, since it constitutes the start of the emblematic invention, not only in the case of Sambucus but also in those of Alciato and Bocchi. In fact, as we have seen, most of the poems were probably completed before the designing of the pictures for Sambucus' emblems had even started.²

¹ About 'Dum potes vive. Ad Achillem Bocchium, tanquam parentem, de sepia' (Live while you can; to Achille Bocchi, as if to my father, about the cuttlefish [73]), see the previous chapter, p. 125. See furthermore Bocchi, *Symbolicarum quaestionum, de universo genere, quas serio ludebat libri quinque* (Bologna: *In aedibus novae academiae Bocchianae*, 1555); facsimiles of the second edition (Bologna: 'Societas Typographiae Bononiensis', 1574), edited by Stephen Orgel, New York-London, 1979, and one edited by Stefania Massari, with an Italian translation (to be used with care) by Maria Bianchelli Illuminati, as volume 2 of the catalogue *Giulio Bonasone* (Rome, 1983). Very useful is the edition, with a French translation and a thorough study by Anne Rolet, *Les Symbolicae Quaestiones d'Achille Bocchi (1555): Recherche sur les modèles littéraires, philosophiques et spirituels d'un recueil d'emblèmes à l'époque de la Réforme. (Édition, traduction, et étude d'ensemble)*, 4 vols. [unpublished PhD thesis] (Poitiers, 1998). See also her introduction to Bocchi's emblem book in Enenkel and Visser (eds.), *Mundus Emblematicus*, pp. 101–130 and Watson, *Achille Bocchi*.

² Probably, most of the epigrams were composed before 1563. The early date is

Prehistory of the Emblematic Epigram

The genre of the epigram received a new and exciting impulse in the first decades of the sixteenth century. In 1494 the first edition of the Planudean Anthology was published in Florence by the Greek refugee-scholar Janus Lascaris.³ The collection of Greek epigrams had only recently been introduced in Italy and the edition triggered new scholarship. Gradually, the epigrams were translated, paraphrased and imitated. Because the knowledge of Greek was still confined to a relatively small number of scholars, these Latin versions were for most readers the first introduction to the Greek Anthology.⁴

The earliest use of the Greek epigram is to be found in funerary and religious contexts in the seventh century B.C.⁵ In this period, the epigram was a short verse inscription on tombstones or votive offerings. The first, archaic epigrams were written in prose, but at an early stage, from the sixth century onwards, elegiac distichs became the most common form. The concrete application of the epigram determined its most basic characteristic: in order to fit on a grave-stone or an artefact the epigram had to be short, often mentioning little more than the names of the deceased, gods and the artists concerned. This use is still followed for example by Alciato in his epitaph for the first duke of Milan, Galeazzo Visconti and by Sambucus in his funerary epigrams for Petrus Lotichius Secundus and Georgius Bona.⁶

confirmed by the dedication to Bocchi, for example: Bocchi died on 6 November, 1562; see previous chapter, p. 121.

³ For the history of the Greek Anthology in the Renaissance see the studies by James Hutton, *The Greek Anthology in Italy to the year 1800* (Ithaca, 1935) and *The Greek Anthology in France and in the Latin Writers of The Netherlands to the year 1800* (Ithaca, 1946).

⁴ See Peter Burke's chapter about the Renaissance attitude towards Greek in *Perceptions of the Ancient Greeks*, ed. Kenneth Dover (Oxford, 1992), pp. 128–146, and also Hutton, *The Greek Anthology in France*, pp. 4–5. A lucid survey on the definition, theory and diversity in the genre is provided by Peter Hess, *Epigramm* (Realien zur Literatur, 248) (Stuttgart, 1989).

⁵ For a history of the epigram in ancient Greece, see the introduction to Hermann Beckby's edition of the *Anthologia Graeca*, 2nd edn. (Munich, [ca. 1965]) pp. 12–67; Kathryn J. Gutzwiller, *Poetic Garlands. Hellenistic Epigrams in Context* (Berkeley, 1998), pp. 1–14, and Alan Cameron, *The Greek Anthology from Meleager to Planudes* (Oxford, 1993), pp. 1–18.

⁶ Alciato's emblem no. 134, 'Tumulus Ioannis Galeacii Vicecomitis, primi Ducis Mediolanensis'; For Sambucus: 'Epitaphium Lotichii S.' [183] (Lotichius had died in 1560) and 'Epitaphium generosi adolescentis Georgii Bonae Transylvani, tan-

Later, the literary epigram developed not only as an inscribed poem, but also in a wider social setting, as poetry that was recited at symposia. The poems were now concerned with a wide range of subjects. According to the different functions, they could be presented in funerary, amatory, didactic, or religious contexts. The genre included drinking songs and epitaphs, moral anecdotes and obscene witticisms.

The edition of the Planudean Anthology had an important impact on the development of the humanist epigram. To the sixteenth-century reader the collection was presented in the form of an anthology. Rather than a collection composed and ordered by one author, the humanists met with a massive compilation of epigrams composed by many authors over a period of centuries. Although the medieval compiler Planudes had selected the collection of epigrams and revised parts of it, it nevertheless offered a wide range of models. Not surprisingly, the sixteenth-century production of epigrams was diversified in style and thematic scope in equal measure.⁷ Besides the satirical, pointed model of Martial's epigrams (first printed in 1471, but widely circulated in manuscript before), the 'Greek style' became an important paradigm for less polemic epigrams.⁸

Due to its diversity the Greek model is difficult to pin down as a coherent genre. "There are as many types of epigrams as there are subjects," Scaliger observed in his contemporary study on poetry, "they are moulded in as many verse forms as there are metres, phrased in as many words, genera, species, forms, figures and modes of words as there are in the span of a particular language, country, people or group."⁹ It was exactly this diversity that caused its popularity. The epigram could be used in all the different settings of daily life in the Republic of Letters.

quam fratris [. . .]' [211] (Bona died in 1559); see also 'In morte vita' (Life in death [110]), about the tomb of Juan Luis Vives.

⁷ Harry C. Schnur, "The Humanist Epigram and its Influence on the German Epigram" in *Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Lovaniensis*, ed. J. IJsewijn, E. Keßler (Munich, 1973), pp. 557–576. A neat introduction to the humanist epigram is the anthology compiled and edited by Harry G. Schnur, Rainer Kößling, *Galle und Honig. Humanistenepigramme. Lateinisch und Deutsch* (Leipzig, 1982).

⁸ Hess, *Epigramm*, pp. 77–82. About the debate between supporters of the satirising epigram or the Greek style, see Hutton, *The Greek Anthology in France*, pp. 51–54. Schnur primarily stresses the dominance of the satirical model ("The Humanist Epigram," esp. pp. 561–562).

⁹ "Epigrammatum autem genera tot sunt, quot rerum; tot versuum generibus

It is well-known that the Greek Anthology played a particularly important part in the development of the emblem. In fact, Andrea Alciato was one of the early students of the Planudean anthology.¹⁰ Of his Latin translations, thirty were later reused in his emblem book, a number that would further expand in later editions. As Alison Saunders has shown, the epigrams he used in his *Emblemata* cannot be distinguished in any fundamental way from the other epigrams in the Greek Anthology. Apart from the fact that all are “obviously susceptible of general moral interpretation,” there are no special emblematic characteristics to be found.¹¹ Apparently, Alciato did not consider the emblematic epigram as a distinct kind of poetry. This striking observation may serve as a starting point for a further exploration of Sambucus’ epigrams, and an assessment of the differences in form and structure between his poems and those of Alciato and Bocchi.

Preliminary to this, some statistics about the collections are in place. The number of emblems varies from 212 emblems by Alciato,¹² 151 symbols in Bocchi’s work¹³ and 223 emblems in Sambucus’ collection.¹⁴ Furthermore, in accordance with Scaliger’s observation, the

explicantur quot sunt versuum genera; tot verbis verborumque generibus, speciebus, formis, figuris, modis componuntur, quot sunt in quocumque linguae nationis, populi, gentis ambitu genera, species, formae, figurae, modi verborum.” Julius Caesar Scaliger, *Poetics libri septem*, 3.125.170a; I consulted the edition (with German translation) by Luc Deitz, vol. 4 (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 1995), p. 206.

¹⁰ In a selection of Greek epigrams of 1528, nine epigrams are translated by Alciato; the next year a new edition was published including 153 epigrams translated by Alciato; see Alison Saunders, “Alciati and the Greek Anthology,” *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, 12.1 (1982), 1–18, esp. p. 3.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, p. 16.

¹² These 212 emblems count a total of 217 epigrams. The numbering and English translations of Alciato’s emblems refer here, as elsewhere, to the edition by Daly-Callahan-Cuttler. Emblems 94; 200; 211 have two epigrams; emblem 199 has three.

¹³ In total the collection includes 171 epigrams: symbols 16; 25; 32; 38; 43; 44; 50; 56; 59; 60; 62; 64; 71; 76; 123; 148; 149 have two epigrams; symbol 15 has four.

¹⁴ The first edition of 1564 consists of 168 emblems, but in the second edition, the number of emblems is increased to 223, comprising a total of 228 epigrams. In all subsequent Latin editions the epithalamium ‘In sponsalia Ioannis Ambii Angli, et Albae Rolleae D. Arnoldi Medici Gandavensis filiae’ is excluded, bringing the total number to 222. The emblems ‘Malum interdum simili arcendum’ (Sometimes evil has to be averted by evil [16]); ‘Iudicium Paridis’ (The judgement of Paris [143]); ‘Dulcia cum amaris’ (The sweet with the bitter [154]) have two epigrams each; ‘Epitaphium Generosi adolescentis Georgii Bonae Transilvani’ [211] comprises three epitaphs. In three cases another author than Sambucus is specified: the sec-

epigrams are presented in a variety of metrical patterns. Alciato predominantly uses the elegiac distich. Bocchi employs various metres. He uses the distich in 90 epigrams, slightly more than half of the collection, leaving the other half for iambic variants (34), hexameters (21), and epodic metres (13). Sambucus also employs a variety of metrical patterns, but less so than Bocchi: in 69 epigrams, about one third of the total collection, another metrical form than the distich is used.¹⁵

Subject-Matter in Sambucus' Epigrams

Like Alciato and Bocchi before him, Sambucus addresses a profusion of subjects in his emblems, rather than concentrating on a specific area. As we have seen, Sambucus himself makes an attempt to order the collection by arranging the emblems into three categories: moral, natural and historical-anecdotal subjects. In fact, this division is not very useful and can only roughly indicate the scope of the collection. Rather than an indication of the limits of Sambucus' interest, it is meant to emphasise the variety of the collection. The absence of specific categories for religion or political views does not imply that there are no such emblems. Political issues are dealt with in 'Universus status, ἢ λαοκρατία' (A collective form of government, or mob-rule [21]), 'Consilium' (Counsel [30]), or 'Tyrannus' (The tyrant [154]), for instance, and religious themes are also treated in some of the emblems, though less frequently and less explicitly, for example in 'Mens immota manet' (The mind stays firm [72]; previously discussed on p. 30), 'Sacra ne violato' (Do not profane what is sacred [244]) or 'Non sine numine divum' (Not without divine presence [254]).

ond epigram in the epitaph for Georgius Bona is composed by Jacques Maniquet; Anthonius Verantius is the author of the epigram 'De Turcarum Tyranno' [214] and 'Ex morbo medicina' [229] quotes 13 lines from Horace's *Satirae* 2.3, lines 142–154. 'Pulchritudo vincit' (Beauty prevails [134]) is presented as a translation-adaptation of a poem by Anacreon; in fact this concerns the *Anacreontea*, fragment 24. Furthermore, in the editions of 1566 and later a section is added of 47 epigrams. 45 of these epigrams were first published in 1555 as part of *Poemata quaedam*. A systematic comparison of these earlier epigrams to Sambucus' emblematic epigrams is outside the scope of the present chapter.

¹⁵ Homann identified and analysed the metrical patterns in Sambucus' emblems, *Studien*, pp. 51–69.

Furthermore, the individual emblems are diverse in themselves. The combination of message and example often places particular epigrams in different categories simultaneously. The fusion of seemingly unrelated subjects in a coherent argument is in fact one of the main attractions of the emblematic game. The symbolic interpretation of the laurel tree in 'Conscientia integra' (Honest conscience [12]), for instance, connects the world of mythology to both literary practice and the living world of nature. Similarly, 'Tori reverentia' (Respect for the bed [151]) deals with conjugal ethics by recounting Herodotus' historical anecdote of Candaules and Gyges. Candaules, king of Sardis, was deeply in love with his wife, and so enthusiastic about her beauty, that he persuaded his servant Gyges to see her undressing. When the queen noticed that she was being watched she forced Gyges to decide either to take over the reign and kill Candaules, or to die himself. This historical anecdote is obviously not told to relate the story of how Gyges founded his dynasty, but to illustrate a message about chastity. The use of several examples in one emblem further increases its multifariousness, as can be seen in 'Physica et Ethica' (Physics and ethics [129]). Sambucus here argues for philosophical study through practical examples and illustrates his point by referring, among other things, to Socrates and the plane-tree.

The epigrams are not organised into a cohesive macrostructure.¹⁶ In this respect, Sambucus' collection is again not different from those of his predecessors, Alciato and Bocchi.¹⁷ Variation is the governing principle, rather than a particular order. Only incidentally, the juxtaposition of emblems seems to be induced by a similarity in subject matter, or an iconographic resemblance.¹⁸ This gives the collection

¹⁶ See a possible explanation of the organisation of the book, see also chapter two, pp. 66–69.

¹⁷ However, in several editions Alciato's emblems have been ordered according to *loci communes* (firstly in the edition by Rouille-Bonhomme, Lyon, 1548). For the relation between emblems and commonplace-books, see chapter six, pp. 185–189. About the order of emblems in Bocchi, see Rolet, *Les Symbolicae Quaestiones d'Achille Bocchi*, pp. 715–717.

¹⁸ For example the consecutive emblems 'Amor dubius' (The two sides of love [90]) and 'Dulce venenum' (Sweet poison [74]) both deal with (the dangers of) love, while another poem on Venus 'Malum interdum simili arcendum' (Sometimes evil has to be averted by evil [16]) is not included in this sequence. For couples with iconographic similarity, see, for example, the recurring of a ball ('pilula' and 'pila') in 'Temporis iactura' (Waste of time [121]) and 'Dii coepta secundant' (The gods prosper undertakings [122]).

as a whole a somewhat fragmented character. Emblems on the same moral theme may even be slightly contradictory, depending on the rhetorical perspective of the argument. Sambucus illustrates, for instance, his emblem 'In copia minor error' (There is less fault in abundance [16]) with the example of the unnecessarily long tail of a fox, while only two emblems further, in 'Superfluum inutile' (Excess is useless [19]) he underlines the use of each part in nature.¹⁹ Sambucus' emblems are clearly not composed as part of a systematic, logically coherent programme. To some extent, the old definition of the term emblem as a 'detachable ornament' still applies to Sambucus' epigrams. Each emblem can easily be isolated from its broader context.

Moreover, the diverse and fragmented character of the collection also solicits caution in interpreting the emblems as an expression of Sambucus' opinions. The epigrams explore the rhetorical potential of well-known topics. Rather than examining particular thematic groups of emblems, any idea-historical approach of this work should therefore focus on the game element of the emblem and the implicit ideology behind the overt message.

However, this does not mean that the emblems do not reflect the author's personal background and interest. Within the broad range of subjects, the emblems are marked by a particular humanist perception. In the first place, the emblems show a strong fascination for classical culture and literature. Examples from Greek and Latin history and mythology are ubiquitous, as are the quotations, allusions and paraphrases of the literary classics. The use of these sources will be analysed in more detail in the next chapter. For now, it will suffice to note that the interest in Antiquity is more than a merely historical pursuit. It is firmly embedded in the intellectual culture of Renaissance humanism. The orientation on scholarly issues is clearly represented in emblems about books, like 'Usus libri, non lectio prudentes facit' (The use of a book, not reading makes sensible [56])

¹⁹ Compare the last lines of 'In copia minor error': 'Prodigus in vitio minus est quam prorsus avarus; / Virtutis potius congruit ille modo' (Someone wasteful is less in a state of moral shortcoming than someone thoroughly greedy; he better blends in with a form of virtue.) with the conclusion of 'Superfluum inutile': 'Cuique suum tribuit varium qui condidit orbem / Quique dedit totum, parte deesse nequit.' (He who created the multifarious world, shared out to each his own, and he who gave the whole cannot fail.)

and ‘Vel levia multitudine clarent’ (Through quantity even light things can bring fame [247]) about the art of printing. Other aspects of scholarly life are addressed, for instance, in ‘Antiquitatis studium’ (The study of antiquity [164]), about antiquarian occupations, ‘Avaritia huius saeculi’ (The greed of this time [170]) about patronage of the arts, or ‘Insignia valent’ (Insignia are important [242]) about the academic ritual of the doctor’s hat.

Structure

With all the variety of subjects in Sambucus’ epigrams, they have one element in common: all are written from a didactic, moralising perspective.²⁰ Sambucus wants to present his readers a convincing argument. This rhetorical aim constitutes the basic pattern of the epigrams and affects their structure in a specific way. The argument is organised around a moral theme, usually concisely expressed by the motto.²¹ The greater part of Sambucus’ mottoes consists of practical indications of the subject of the emblem, phrased in usually no more than three words.²² In the epigram itself, Sambucus tries to prove his point by means of analogy, either in the form of a comparison to concrete objects, or by presenting an allegorical anecdote. However, the relation between the example and the moral theme is preferably not self-evident. Thus, in order to convince the reader of

²⁰ A few emblems have a different purpose: the opening emblem, dedicated to emperor Maximilian II is encomiastic in tone, similarly ‘Tirnaviae patriae meae arma’ (The coat of arms of my native town Trnava [165]) praises the qualities of this city; the aforementioned funerary poems for Petrus Lotichius and Georgius Bona are epitaphs.

²¹ The last emblem of the collection [287] has no motto in any of the editions in which it is printed (1566 and later). The emblem compares the sophists to croaking frogs. Perhaps the absence of the motto is iconic of the silence preferred to the verbosity referred to in the epigram.

²² In some cases, Sambucus rephrases the subject more precisely in a second clause, as for instance ‘Nullum malum solum, vel uno bono sublato mille existunt’ (No evil comes alone, or, if one good is removed, a thousand new evils emerge [127]), or ‘Odi memorem compotorem’ (I hate a drinking companion with a good memory [61]) specified by the title ‘De oblivione et ferula Baccho dicata’ (about forgetfulness and the dedication of the stick fennel to Bacchus), in this case printed above the general motto.

the connection Sambucus usually explains the example in more general terms. The transition from example to generalisation is frequently indicated by pointers like 'ita', 'ut', 'sic' (thus, like, in that way).

The three structural components, then, are the example (consisting of concrete phenomena or anecdotes), the moral lesson, and the generalisation.²³ These components can be ordered in several ways.

In more than half of the emblems, the epigram opens with a presentation of the example.²⁴ In 'Tempestiva prosunt' (The seasonable is useful [117]), for instance, the first six lines are about the snake and the annual change of its skin:

1. Exuvium Thirus²⁵ deponit quolibet anno,
Induitur pellem mox iterumque novam.
Hunc si persequeris qua se solet exuere hora,
Pellis non manibus praeda petita venit.
Atque ita frustratus longas remeabis ad aedes,
Bestia theriacis nulla venena dabit.
2. Utile qui sequitur, discernat tempora causas;
Anni mille negant hora quod una tulit.
3. Quidque suum poscit tempus: sunt munera veris,
Autumni atque hiemis, fit vicibusque calor.
Colchica ver, aestas segetes, autumnus racemos
Das urensque typhas bruma regignit aquis.

(A *tirus* [sort of snake] sloughs off its skin each year, and then soon puts on another. If you pursue this animal at the time it is accustomed to lay it off, you will hold in your hands the skin, not the animal you hunted. And when you return to your big home, deceived like this, the animal will give no poison at all for antidotal purposes. He who pursues something useful, should distinguish between time and cause. A thousand years may deny what one hour has brought.

²³ Homann, *Studien zur Emblematik*, p. 69 divides the structure of the emblems into three categories, one starting with a reference to the picture (consisting of in total 130 emblems), another opening with general statements (77), and a third, small group (15) of epigrams dealing with abstract arguments. Unfortunately, the analysis of the structure of the epigram is here mixed with that of the relation between epigram and *pictura*.

²⁴ This is not necessarily a reference to the *pictura* (see Homann, *Studien*, p. 69). See also the analysis of the relation between epigram and picture in chapter seven.

²⁵ Snake species; cf. Jacob of Maerlant, *Der naturen bloeme* VI 11386–11427. The word is related to the Greek θήρ/θηρίον meaning 'wild animal'; hence also the word 'theriacus', Greek θηριακός: 'serving to cure the bites of poisonous animals, usu. snakes' (Oxford Latin Dictionary, s.v.). The epigram draws on this connection between the name of the snake and its pharmacological use.

Everything calls for its proper time; Spring, Autumn and Winter have their merit, and in return it becomes warm. Spring, you bring the meadow saffron; you, Summer, the crops, Autumn, you give grapes, and scorching winter produces whirlwinds again.)

Sambucus develops the example (1) of the snake by presenting a set of actions. Firstly, he introduces the central notion of the annual changing of the skin. Secondly, he focuses on a specific situation: the man who wishes to catch a snake for medical purposes. These two aspects of the example are combined in a provisional conclusion: it is useless to try to catch a snake at the time it changes skins. The only thing one will catch is an empty skin that will not offer an antidote to poison.

When the practicalities of snake hunting have been explained, the argument proceeds with a general moral message (2) about ‘proper time.’ The word *utile* (useful), introduces the general moral category that is at stake here. The antidote of the snake is generalised in terms of the use of nature. The changing of the skin represents (in a conventional way) the continuity of the natural seasons. Finally, the conclusion (3) of the epigram captures the moral message of the emblem: “*Quidque suum poscit tempus*” (everything calls for its proper time). Each of the seasons has its own merits. The repetition of the seasons underlines the argument while marking the conclusion of the epigram.

Sambucus varies the order of the three constituents in his epigrams. In some cases he starts with a general moral notion, and then illustrates it with a specific example. We see this order in ‘*Ridicula ambitio*’ (Ridiculous ambition [54]):

2. *Quid non ambitio persuadet dedita vanis,*
Dum ex levibus certum captat inepta decus?
1. *Annon ex avium cantu, quas gutture nomen*
Fingere consuerat, notior esse cupit.
His igitur tandem missis ut spargere in Orbe
Nomen heri possent atque sonare procul,
Pristina continuo repetebant carmina sylvis
Annonis et votum docta fefellit avis.
Ficedulas etiam religatas pertrahit esca,
Stamina si rumpant, libera rura petunt.
3. *In levibus quaeso firmam ne ponito laudem;*
Sola fugit virtus tristia fata rogi.

(What does ambition, devoted to foolish matters, not persuade to do, silly as she is, in trying to achieve distinct glory from foolish actions?)

Hanno wanted to become famous through the song of the birds he had taught to counterfeit his name with their throat. But, when in the end they were released, so they could spread the name of their master over the world, and celebrate it in places far away, they immediately took up their old songs in the woods. The learned bird failed to come up to Hanno's wish. Food still lures fig-peckers into captivity, but if they break the threads [of the net], they make for the open fields. Please do not found praise on foolish matters; only virtue escapes the sad fate of the funeral pyre.)

Sambucus here indicates the moral message of the anecdote right at the outset.²⁶ The argument is not focused on a remarkable connection between moral and example, but on the amusing point in the anecdote itself. The conclusion is phrased as a personal request of the poet ('*quaeso*'), indicating the transition from the anecdote to the moral lesson. In this type of structure, the example is surrounded by a moral introduction and a moral conclusion, which renders the didactic nature of Sambucus' emblems more prominent than in the structural order discussed previously.

In some cases a different narrative point of view varies these patterns. Especially attractive stratagems in this respect were the use of dialogue, containing questions and answers, and *prosopopeia*, the figure of speech in which inanimate things, plants, trees or animals tell the reader their story, or are addressed in the second person. An example of a dialogue can be found in 'Principum negligentia' (Carelessness of princes [187]), dedicated to Joachim Camerarius:

Quid Polyphemus habet? Trunco vestigia firmat,
 Errat balantum grex sequiturque ducem.
 Caecus at est custos cui vino lumen ademptum
 Solaturque novum fistula rauca malum.
 Nonne haec conveniunt nostri queis credita cura est,
 Princeps seu pastor sit ratione carens?
 Deliciae privant quos cernis luce perenni
 Suavibus ac hilares otia rebus agunt.
 Heu cuncta in peius labuntur, fata suprema
 Nos captant; reliquus quis pietatis honos?
 Haec te vix melius quisquam moderatius una
 Scriptis nunc merito quemque monere solet.

²⁶ The source of the anecdote is discussed (with an illustration of the *pictura*) in chapter six, pp. 210–212.

Crassus ego tetros fugiendos semper abusus
 Censeo, sed veterum cuncta levanda nego.
 Quisque suo sensu regitur, conscendit Olympum,
 Nec monstrant gressus qui voluere duces.
 Unum Cyclopes oculum, sed fronte gerebant
 Aëre quo in medio fulgura prospicerent
 Ac superum vates quae essent ventura monerent:
 Nunc Polyphemo orbo lumine lumen eris?

(What is wrong with Polyphemus? He supports his steps with a stick; his flock of sheep strays about and follows its leader. The guard, however, is blind, deprived of light through wine and the hoarse shepherd's pipe softens his recent pain. Is this not appropriate for those who are entrusted with taking care of us, when it is a prince or shepherd without judgement? As you see, pleasure deprives them of eternal light and cheerful they lead a life of leisure under delightful circumstances. Alas, everything falls into a worse state and the final destiny will catch up with us; what respect for duty is left? Justly, now hardly anyone else is used to teach in his writings everyone exactly this better and more moderately at the same time than you are. I, crude as I am, believe that loathsome abuses should always be avoided, but do not think everything of the forefathers should be abolished. Everyone is guided by his own reason and ascends to the Olympus, and the leaders who have wanted to do it, do not show the way. The Cyclopes had only one eye, but on their forehead, with which they could foresee the lightning in the middle of the air and show, as seers of the gods, what would come; will you now be a light for us, as Polyphemus is bereft of light?)

Although this dialogue is not exactly a lively conversation between two partners, one can understand how the structure of question and answer was perceived as a pleasant variation in presenting an argument. Playing on the same idea are some other epigrams where the question steers the presentation of the subject, such as 'Malum interdum simile arcendum' (Evil sometimes has to be kept off by evil [17]), dealing in two separate epigrams with the birth of Venus to illustrate the paradoxical relation between the four elements and temperaments, and 'Insignia Mercurii quid?' (What are the signs of Mercury? [111]), summing up and interpreting the attributes of Mercury.

Furthermore the figure of *prosopopeia* was a familiar and fairly popular form for epigrams in general, and emblematic ones in particular. Both Alciato and Bocchi frequently employ it in their emblems. In Sambucus' 'Utilitatis ergo. Limax' (For the sake of its use. The snail [33]), a snail complains about opportunistic friends and the risks of shedding its shell:

Dum latitans domiporta vagor mensasque paratu
 Orno, vel in venerem luxuriosa vocor,
 Omnes certatim redimunt, me colligit usus,
 Deliciis nequeo tum exaturare famem.
 Deposui quando concham (quae grata voluntas)
 Proteror aut risu saepe revolvor humi.
 Donec profueris, se quilibet addit amicum;
 Casibus adversis mox violatur honos.

(As long as I am concealed, carrying my home, and I wander and adorn dinner tables, or as long as I am called as a delicate aphrodisiac, everybody is fighting to purchase me; usefulness ties me up. At those moments, I cannot satisfy their hunger with my delight. But when I have laid down my shell—which is an alluring wish—I am crushed, or I am rolled back on the floor, for fun, many times. As long as you are of use, anybody becomes your friend, but in times of misfortune, honour will soon be violated.)

Clearly, the narrative point of view affects the structure. Here, the *exemplum* presents itself. It cannot be expected to extend on its own significance in more general moral terms. This generalisation is therefore excluded and the ‘speaking example’ concludes with a central message in its own words.

In epigrams of this type, the *exemplum* is less instrumental than in the categories discussed before.²⁷ It does not function as a subsidiary argument in demonstrating the general moral, but it takes a central place in the epigram. The moral can therefore not always be set apart from the example. For example, in ‘*Temporis iactura*’ (Waste of time [114]), a tennis ball (in this case free-tennis) is reprimanded in a severe tone. The narrator lectures the ball for wasting the time of young men. This is not followed by a denunciation of any waste of time in general. At the end of the poem, it is still the ball, not the reader that is addressed:

Aut igitur sumptus minuas et tempora multis
 Restitue, aut nunquam sufferat aura levem.

(So, either reduce your expenses, and give back time to many, or may the wind never hold you, light thing, high.)

²⁷ Similar epigrams are ‘*Poetica*’ (Poetry [47]); ‘*Dum vivo prosum*’ (I am useful as long as I live [145]); ‘*Canis queritur nimium nocere*’ (A dog complains that excess harms [172]) and ‘*Temporis iactura*’ (Waste of time [121]).

Although the moral tenor of the epigram is evident, the role of the example is more prominent. Apart from the use of apostrophe and *prosopopeia*, also that of ecphrasis, like the description (and interpretation) of the coat of arms of the Fugger family, and personifications belong to this group.²⁸

If we now compare Sambucus' epigrams to those by Alciato and Bocchi, the most important differences regard the role of the example and the extent to which the epigram is elaborated. As Homann rightly observed, Sambucus gives much attention to the logical development of the argument.²⁹ Alciato, however, often spends few words on relating the example to the moral by means of a generalisation. The argument of his epigrams is frequently concise and elliptical. In contrast to what has been observed by others, in this respect Alciato's epigrams generally seem more obscure than those of Sambucus.³⁰ This is also the case with Bocchi's emblems, but for different reasons. Because of the strongly heterogeneous character of his collection, the structure of his symbols is more difficult to characterise in general terms. One of the immediately apparent differences is the frequent use of more (and often longer) mottos to one symbol. Furthermore, his epigrams are for an important part determined by the method of the *quaestio* (inquiry), already announced in the title of his book. This involves the analysis of a particular problem through question and answer.³¹ In those cases where this is not the explicit format of the epigram, it can still often be inferred. Apart from the dialogues and related forms treated above, Sambucus also employs this method, for example, in 'Cur sues cancris vescantur' (Why swine eat cancers [55]), 'Noctuae cur Platano abigantur' (Why the night-owl is averted by the plane-tree [184]) and 'Dolus an virtus quis in hoste requirat?' (What is needed against the enemy: treachery or

²⁸ For ecphrasis and personification in the epigrams, see, for example, 'Generosis DD. Marco et Ioanni Fuggeris fratribus' [75], 'Aesculapius' [84], 'Grammaticae Dialecticae Rhetoricae Historiae differentia' (The difference between grammar, dialectics, rhetorics and history [132]), 'Tirnaviae patriae meae arma' [165], or 'Degeneres. Theca loquitur' (Degenerates. The [lute] box speaks [169]).

²⁹ Homann, *Studien*, p. 69.

³⁰ Pierre Laurens, *L'Abeille dans l'ambre. Célébration de l'épigramme de l'époque alexandrine à la fin de la Renaissance* (Paris, 1989), p. 452, pp. 458–459. Laurens is probably influenced by the rhetorical strategy of Sambucus' preface (see chapter three).

³¹ Rolet, *Les Symbolicae Quaestiones d'Achille Bocchi*, vol. 2, pp. 691–695.

virtue? [239]) Although Bocchi's collection includes shorter, anecdotal epigrams, it presents more often a vehicle of longer, dialectic arguments. In this respect the emblems of Sambucus resemble his symbols. However, Bocchi's line of reasoning is usually more elaborate, and often involves technical philosophical concepts. Even if Bocchi's argument is clearly structured, the philosophical subject-matter makes his emblems seem more complex, compared to Sambucus' more practical lessons.

The differences between Alciato and Sambucus may first be illustrated by two emblems about Actaeon, the legendary huntsman who was killed by his own dogs. In the epigram of 'In receptatores sicariorum' (On harborers of murderers [52]) Alciato addresses a reckless man with unreliable friends:

Latronum furumque manus tibi, Scaeva, per urbem
 It comes et diris cincta cohors gladiis.
 Atque ita te mentis generosum, prodige, censes,
 Quod tua complureis allicit olla malos.
 En novus Actaeon, qui postquam cornua sumpsit,
 In praedam canibus se dedit ipse suis.

(A band of brigands and thieves accompanies you, Scaeva, through the city, and a gang girt with dreadful swords. And so profligate, you think yourself generous in spirit, because your pot attracts a host of evil-doers. Behold a new Actaeon, who, after he put on the antlers, gave himself as prey to his own dogs.)³²

The name of the person addressed in the epigram, Scaeva (Evil-minded), is a telling name, and reflects the moral intention of the narrator.³³ Still, within the space of the epigram Scaeva is not presented as an example to a moral lesson. The comparison between Scaeva and Actaeon is only briefly elaborated in the reference to Actaeon's dogs. The visual potential of the story is indicated by the word 'en' (look). The narrative of the example itself is concise. It

³² Alciato, emblem 52. Another English translation by Betty I. Knott is published in the facsimile of the 1550 Lyon edition (Aldershot, 1996); see furthermore Heckscher, *The Princeton Alciati Companion*.

³³ In some editions this word is not capitalised. In this case, 'scaeva' can also serve as an adjective to manus: 'an evil-minded band of ruffians'; see the commentary by Betty Knott (Aldershot, 1996).

only focuses on those elements of the story that are directly relevant to the point Alciato wishes to make. This degree of narrative economy is absent in Sambucus' work. In his case the exemplum serves primarily as proof of an ethical message. The example of Actaeon in 'Voluptas aerumnosa' (Wretched delight [109]) is instrumental for a general section in which pleasure-seekers are warned:

Qui nimis exercet venatus ac sine fine
 Haurit opes patrias prodigit inque canes,
 Tantus amor vani, tantus furor usque recursat,
 Induat ut celeris cornua bina ferae.
 Accidit Actaeon tibi, qui cornutus ab ortu,
 A canibus propriis dilaceratus eras.
 Quam multos hodie, quos pascit odora canum vis,
 Venandi studium conficit atque vorat.
 Seria ne ludis postponas, commoda damnis;
 Quod superest rerum sic ut egenus habe.
 Saepe etiam propria qui interdum uxore relicta
 Deperit externas corniger ista luit.

(He who cultivates hunting too much and endlessly consumes the family riches, and squanders it on his dogs; so much love of emptiness, such rage keeps coming back, that he puts on the double horn of the quick wild beast. This happened to you, Actaeon, who, from the moment that you were horned, were torn to pieces by your own dogs. How many, whom the keen-scented power of the dogs nurtures, are killed and devoured by the eagerness for hunting today. Do not treat serious matters as inferior to playful affairs, nor benefits as inferior to losses. Consider your extra possessions as if you were needy. Often even now, he who occasionally abandons his own wife and desperately loves other women, pays for this as a horn-bearer.)

More explicitly than Alciato Sambucus presents Actaeon as an example of the fatal consequences of squandering. Actaeon is used as an example that reinforces the general argument. The moralisation is all the more prominent, since it is amplified by a second argument: apart from urging to avoid squandering, Sambucus also stresses the need to lead a serious and responsible life ("Seria ne ludis postponas, commoda damnis"). The differences with Alciato's use of the same example are clear. There, Actaeon is not part of a discursive argument, but used as an allusion to a mythical example of self-destruction.

If we now turn to one of Bocchi's symbols, we can see that the example here also functions as an illustration of a more general argument. The mottoes to his symbols are often quite explicit in indicating his moral message. If his symbols seem to be more complex

than Sambucus' emblems, this is caused by his frequent reference to philosophical concepts, or by a sometimes more elaborate analysis of the example. The differences, however, are less marked than between Alciato and Sambucus. Bocchi's emblem about the crocodile may serve as a case in point:

Non appeti debere gloriam, at sequi veram. Invidia enim pessima una hac vincitur
 Nota Paretonii Crocodilus bellua Nili
 Sectantes fugitat, qui fugitant sequitur.
 Usu etiam ille caret linguae morbisque levandis
 Utile corporeis suaveque stercus habet.
 Sic vera instantes spernit, spernentibus instat
 Gloria, quin maior spreta redire solet.
 Nil opus est lingua, celebris quum fama loquatur,
 Et virtus merces sit sibi pulchra satis.
 Praecipuam utilitatem affert quoque gloria, tollit
 Multa animi vitia atque invidiam superat,
 Contra vana illa est popularis, quae Crocodili
 Fucatur suavi stercore gloriola.

(One must not aim at glory, but follow the true glory, because it is the only thing that conquers the worst form of envy.

The crocodile, the famous monster of the Egyptian Nile, flees the ones who are after it, and follows who flee it. And also, it lacks the use of a tongue, and it has a sweet tongue, useful for the treatment of physical illnesses. Thus true glory scorns those who press hard on it, and presses on those who scorn it, so that once scorned it comes back in a bigger form. There is no need for a tongue, when renowned fame speaks. Virtue in itself is good enough a reward. Glory also brings along a particular advantage: it lifts up many errors of the mind and conquers envy. In contrast futile is that common glory, the modest glory that is coloured by the sweet dung of the crocodile.) (Symbol 99)

The crocodile here represents the theme of glory in three respects: firstly by his inclination to shun those who are following it (and *vice versa*), secondly by its lack of a tongue and, thirdly, by its excrement. Just like Sambucus Bocchi clearly explains the relation between the emblematic example and the moral metatext, both in the motto and the epigram.

Generalising an example affects its function within the epigram. In the case of Alciato the example takes a more central role. These epigrams are directed more at representation than at presenting a convincing argument. Like Bocchi, Sambucus' use of examples is situated in the context of a more extensive line of reasoning. In his epigrams the example is frequently subsidiary to a general message.

Two further emblems about fame may illustrate the differences. The central purpose of Alciato's well-known emblem 'Ex litterarum studiis immortalitatem acquiri' (Immortality is achieved by literary studies [133]) is to impart an iconography of literary fame to the readers:

Neptuni tubicen (cuius pars ultima cetum,
 Aequeoreum facies indicat esse Deum)
 Serpentis medio Triton comprehenditur orbe,
 Qui caudam inserto mordicus ore tenet.
 Fama viros animo insignes praeclaraque gesta
 Prosequitur, toto mandat et orbe legi.

(Triton, a trumpeter of Neptune, whose lower part shows that he is a sea-monster, and whose face shows that he is a sea-god, is framed by an encircling snake, which prone to bite, holds its tail in its mouth. Fame pursues men illustrious in spirit, and noble deeds, and orders that they be read by the entire world.)

Alciato mainly describes the example. Although he explains the imagery in the last distich, the example itself takes the central place in the epigram. In contrast, in 'Minuit praesentia famam' (Presence weakens a reputation [40]) Sambucus uses the example as a stepping-stone to his general message:

Nix stat inaccesso quae montis vertice, nullis
 Sint licet urgentes funditur a radiis.
 Ut valeant vires, iusto est opus intervallo
 Fitque repercussus fortior usque calor.
 Quid, quod in humanis minuit praesentia famam,
 Profuit obscuro ac delituisse loco?
 Prodidit ignaros audacia, quosve φιλάτους
 Dicimus, at timidis nec licet esse nimis.
 Multi quos studium et commendat Pallas amica,
 Dum tacere vigent, publica scripta premunt.

(The snow lying on the inaccessible top of the mountain does not melt by any rays, not even pressing ones. In order to exert power, a proper distance is necessary, and reflecting heat keeps becoming stronger. Why is it that, in social life, presence weakens a reputation, and it is useful to be hidden in an obscure place? Presumptuousness betrays the ignorant, or, the self-absorbed, as we call them; but, on the other hand, one should not be too shy. Many of those whom scholarship and her friend Pallas recommend stand strong while they keep silent; their publications lower them.)

The example in this emblem is not presented in a graphically striking way. Rather than focusing on the visual potential of snow and

sun, Sambucus concentrates on the relation between example and its moral interpretation of fame melting away. In contrast to Alciato, the examples in his epigrams are subservient to the general moral message. Sambucus' frequent use of more examples in one epigram should be seen in this light. 'Fortissima minimis interdum cedunt' (The strongest sometimes yield to the very little [227]) may serve as a case in point:

Exardet subito taurus sua cornua in omnes
 Ingeminans rubras si vestes conspicit ante;
 Ingens sic Elephas furit albo saepe colore,
 Irrequietus init pugnas et praelia miscet.
 Ustos sic metuunt pannos cervique fugaces
 Et gallo pavidus leo fit; minimisque ferarum,
 Et rabidi generis franguntur pectora rebus.
 Nemo suis adeo confidat viribus, ut se
 Non putet a longe vinci posse inferiore.
 Occulta est horum quoque nec bene cognita caussa.

(When the bull sees red cloths before him, it suddenly becomes wild, and repeatedly directs its horns against everyone. Similarly, the elephant is often enraged by the colour white; agitated it starts to fight and joins battles. Also, swift deer are afraid of burnt rags and the lion is terrified of the cock. The hearts of the fierce species of wild beasts are daunted even by the smallest things. Nobody should put so much trust in his own strength, that he believes he cannot be overcome by something of far inferior stature. The reason for this is secret, and not well understood.)

The list of examples not only enhances the argument, but also reduces their individual symbolic power.³⁴ Since all animals are examples of strong beasts, a single one could have served as a general symbol. This is more often the strategy Alciato adopts, as is demonstrated in 'A minimis quoque timendum' (Insignificant things must also be feared [169]). The emblem deals with the same theme, but confines the illustration to the example of the beetle and the eagle:

Bella gerit scarabaeus et hostem provocat ultro,
 Robore et inferior consilio superat.
 Nam plumis aquilae clam se neque cognitus abdit,
 Hostilem ut nidum summa per astra petat.

³⁴ Alciato's emblem 'Doctorum agnomina' (Nick-names of professors [no. 97]), for instance, also lists numerous emblematic examples, but not as subsidiary to a general argument.

Ovaque confodiens prohibet spem crescere prolis:
 Hocque modo illatum dedecus ultus abit.

(The beetle is waging war and of its own accord provokes its enemy; and though weaker in strength, it conquers through strategy. For without being discovered it hides itself in the eagle's feathers, in order to seek out the enemy nest through the lofty stars. And piercing the eggs it prevents the hope of offspring from growing. Having thus avenged the shame inflicted on it, it departs.)

In contrast to Alciato, Sambucus is keen to guide the reader's interpretation. A final example of Sambucus' attitude towards the exemplum is 'Conscius ipse sibi' (Self-Consciousness [196]). In this emblem, jaundice exemplifies how prejudice colours one's perception. Yet, in the last line Sambucus briefly brings up another example, that of a fox showing himself to be conscious of his fault:

Quod sunt malorum conscii, primi ac duces,
 Sic arguunt sese mali.
 Ovem lupus rapiens remulcet caudulam.

(In this way, the wicked prove themselves guilty, because they are aware of sins and the first guides to them. A fox stealing a sheep lays back its tail.)

The sudden inclusion of a second example (which is also represented in the *pictura*) enhances the rhetorical force of the argument. In this way, Sambucus' argument does not take its point of departure from the emblematic substance, but from a moral theme.

Of course, apart from the line of reasoning the form of the epigram is to a large extent determined by stylistic means. More perhaps than the structure of the epigrams, their style constitutes a distinctive characteristic of Sambucus' emblems.

Style

According to the preface, Sambucus prefers a certain level of obscurity. The meaning of an emblem should not immediately be clear to the reader, but "be veiled, ingenious, pleasing, and with variety of meaning."³⁵ This obscure character can be noticed in Sambucus'

³⁵ "Itaque tecta, arguta, iucunda et varie significantia sint [...]" Sambucus, *Emblemata*, fol. A2ro.

interest in sometimes recondite subjects, but, as we have seen, it is not reflected in the structure of his epigrams. Apart from selecting learned subjects and striking examples, this obscure side of the emblem is also a matter of style.

In the remainder of this chapter some defining characteristics of Sambucus' style will be assessed against the background of Alciato and Bocchi. An obscure style can be achieved by a number of literary means, such as abstruse and ambiguous vocabulary, brevity, or figures of speech such as the paradox. Apart from the degree of obscurity, attention will also be paid to general characteristics of epigrammatic style, such as point and wit.

Although there are no fixed rules for the length of the epigram, brevity is usually regarded as its most important characteristic. The epigram should be written in a concise style. From a statistical point of view, Alciato's epigrams comply best with the ideal of brevity. More than seventy-seven per cent of his collection consists of 6 lines or less.³⁶ In the case of Bocchi this proportion is almost exactly the opposite: seventy-nine per cent of his epigrams are longer than 6 lines, and almost forty per cent are longer than 12 lines.³⁷ Sambucus takes a position between his two predecessors: only a few epigrams (7) in his collection are 6 lines or shorter, but the greater part of his epigrams are not longer than 12 lines.³⁸ Significant is the absence of any two-line poems in his collection.

These numbers do not, however, demonstrate how brevity of style relates to the obscure type of emblem Sambucus favours. In fact, a concise style does not automatically result in obscurity. In didactic literature, for instance, brevity could exactly serve the clarity of the contents ('*brevitas pura et perspicua*').³⁹ Unlike this type of brevity, the emblematic epigrams are concerned with veiling their message and promoting ambiguity ('*obscura brevitatis*').

³⁶ In most cases (89) his epigrams consist of six lines; 25 of the epigrams are 2 lines long. Eighty of his emblems are shorter than this, leaving 48 epigrams of longer length.

³⁷ 135 out of 171 epigrams are longer than 6 lines.

³⁸ Most frequently his epigrams consist of 10 lines (in 53 cases) or 12 lines (46). Shorter poems are present (42 epigrams, less than 19 per cent), consisting mostly of 8 lines (33 emblems).

³⁹ See Jeroen Jansen, *Brevitas. Beschouwingen over de beknoptheid van vorm en stijl in de renaissance*, 2 vols. (Hilversum, 1995); for the function of obscure brevity in epigrams, see vol. 1, pp. 20–21, 93–97. Furthermore, on 'obscuritas' as a stylistic ideal, see M.A. Schenkeveld-Van der Dussen, *Duistere luister. Aspecten van obscuritas* (Utrecht, 1988).

This type of brevity is most clearly represented in Alciato's style. It is not only reflected in the length of his epigrams, but also in the condensed phrasing and line of thought. Sambucus, on the other hand, is often keen to avoid misinterpretations, resulting in a more elaborate style. In contrast to the plea for obscurity in the preface, in the actual epigrams Sambucus' way of reasoning is often relatively clear and extensive.

As has been observed in the analysis of the structure, Sambucus often thoroughly explains the moral with a generalisation and a number of examples. Ironically, an emblem on excess, 'Superfluum inutile' (Excess is useless [19]) is a case in point. Here, Sambucus argues that everything in nature has a specific use. In doing so he provides more examples than the picture can represent. In addition to the cow and the crocodile, the crane, the swan, the goose and the stork are mentioned. The extensive illustration of the point he wishes to make is typical of Sambucus' style. He would have communicated his message in an equally effective way if he had omitted the lines between brackets:

[Divitias reputo veras quas exigit usus,
 Et sortem insignem quam dat habere Deus.]
 Porrigit en quantam bos lassus pondere linguam,
 E linguis nulla est sed crocodile tibi.
 [Est gruibus, cygnis, anser tibi care, πελάργους
 Collum: non sitiens an opus ales habet?]
 Cuique suum tribuit varium qui condidit orbem,
 Quique dedit totum, parte deesse nequit.

(I consider a real treasure what is required by use, and an outstanding fate the life God gives. Look, what a big tongue the cow stretches out, tired by the weight, while you, crocodile have no tongue at all. Cranes, swans, you dear goose, and storks have a neck; what thirsty bird could do without? To each the Maker of this varied world gave its own, and he who gave all, cannot be imperfect in a part.)

The general moral introduction and the list of examples double the size of the epigram. The examples do not appear to be the point of departure of the epigram, but rather serve as evidence for the central message. Thus, the use of (many) examples and the concern for clarity influence the length of his epigrams. In this respect Sambucus differs from Bocchi. Although in Bocchi's symbols the message is usually made explicit as well, his epigrams are mostly devoted to interpreting one example in more detail. This charac-

teristic and Bocchi's interest in philosophical topics gives the argument frequently a more elaborate character, as can be seen in his symbol on prime substance:

*Prima tenet primas rerum sapientia causas.
Materiam primam mens notha sola tenet.*
Orta salo, uro salum atque solum caelumque profundum
Una ego corrumpens omnia progenero.
A me omnes Natura creat res, auctat alitque,
In me res omnis rursum eadem solvit.
At licet hac videar quae picta est, praedita forma,
Omni forma prorsum ipsa tamen careo.
Sumque mea ac propria ratione incognita prima
Materia illa ego, quam Mens notha sola tenet. (Symbol 28)

*(The first wisdom knows the first reasons of things.
Prime substance can only be known by a bastard thought.*
Born from the sea, I consume sea, land and high heaven; on my own I destroy and create everything. Nature produces, increases and feeds all things from me and in me again she dissolves all matter. However, although I may seem to be endowed with the form depicted here, in fact, I completely lack any form. Without a form of knowing related to me, I am the prime substance, which is only known through a bastard reasoning.

In this case, the subject-matter rather than the style may puzzle the modern reader. The text deals with Plato's hierarchy of the elements of the world, as presented in the *Timaeus*. Plato distinguishes between the Ideas, their reflections in the material objects on earth and, thirdly, the receptacle, or prime substance, on which the ideas have imposed their characteristics. Each of these three elements can only be known through a different form of intelligence: the highest, intuitive form of intelligence is *noesis*, reserved for knowledge of the Ideas only. The material reflections of the Ideas are perceived by the senses, while for the prime substance no proper form of knowing exists: it can only be grasped through a 'bastard reasoning', a term that is drawn from Plato's passage in the *Timaeus*.⁴⁰ In Bocchi's symbol, this Platonic line of thought is assumed as basic knowledge. From this perspective, the mottoes of this symbol present the message in clear

⁴⁰ See Plato, *Timaeus* 51e–52b. For the 'bastard reasoning', the λογισμός νόθος see in particular 52b.

terms: prime substance can only be known through a sort of bastard reasoning. This is subsequently elaborated in the epigram. In this case, Bocchi amply describes the characteristics of prime substance (or rather, its lack of it). The argument about knowledge is only presented in the last line and simply repeats the second motto. In the epigram there is no further reference to the first motto. If the symbol may seem complicated, this is caused by its subject-matter rather than its structure, and certainly not because of *obscura breuitas*.

Two emblems by Sambucus and Bocchi about the temples of honour and courage may serve to show how both authors are keen to explain their view, but in different ways:

*Virtus vestibulum est honoris alma.*⁴¹
 Adstat vestibulo templi Tirynthius heros,
 Posterior signum cellula Honoris habet.
 Dis una fieri, nisi certis, sacra duobus,
 Consule Marcello, Religio vetuit.
 Nam sua debetur seiunctim gratia cuique
 Si qua forte aliquid prodigii acciderit.
 Prodigium est quando alterutrum contingit abesse.
 Abdita causa latet cognita quae superis.
 Inde timore homines perculsi, numina divum
 Implorant ipso in tempore suppliciter.
 At natura parens almae Virtutis honorem
 Constituit proprium ac perpetuum comitem.
 Ad summam verum decus ex virtute parari,
 Hocce monet, vitae nobile propositum,
 Quod sibi prudenter statuit Raynutius Heros,
 Altera spes animi et gloria, Paule, tui. (Symbol 33)

(Propitious valour is the entrance to honour.

The Tirynthian hero [Heracles] stands at the entrance of a temple. The little chamber behind it bears the signs of Honour. During the consulate of Marcellus, a religious law prohibited to have sacrifices to two gods on one day, unless for specific ones. Because each god ought to be thanked separately, in case that any omen will happen. When there is an omen, it may happen that one of the two is absent. The secret reason for this is hidden and is only known to the gods. Therefore, people are struck by fear and suppliantly implore the divine will of the gods at that very moment. But mother Nature has appointed

⁴¹ The symbol is presented as the personal emblem of Ranuccio Farnese, grandson of Alessandro Farnese, pope Paul III. See furthermore Rolet's comments on this symbol, *Les Symbolicae Quaestiones d'Achille Bocchi*, pp. 979–981.

Honour as the personal and eternal companion of propitious Valour. This demonstrates, in all, that true glory can be attained from valour, that noble purpose of life. This is what the hero Ranuccio has prudently determined for himself, who is to you, Paul, a second hope of your heart and your glory.)

Bocchi's emblem closely follows the details of the classical story as related by Livy in his *Ab urbe condita* and Plutarch's biography of Marcellus.⁴² In 208 B.C., the Roman general and consul Marcus Claudius Marcellus planned to restore a temple dedicated to honour, and consecrate it to both honour and virtue. The priests, however, objected that one temple could not be devoted to worshipping two deities simultaneously. Bocchi relates these circumstances and explains the reasons behind the problems. In 'Virtutem honor sequitur' (Honour follows virtue [193]), dedicated to Anthonius Verantius, the bishop of Eger, Sambucus is less interested in the details of the historical situation. He restricts his argument to the connection between valour and honour:

Marcellus duo templa struit virtutis, honorum.
 Hoc sed non patefit nisi praestes inclutus ausis,
 Unica nam porta immittit, nec pervia cuivis.
 [Praeposuit templum virtutis, limina tanquam
 Alterius; quisnam leviter tot praemia laudis
 Consequitur, multum ni sudet et algeat heros?
 Ardua virtutis primum ergo semita, victa
 Molliter in suaves demum deducit honores.]
 Horum sint memores, famam qui forte perennem
 Exoptant, solidis seseque laboribus orment.
 Quod tu es, si quisquam toties legatus in omnes
 Europae atque Asiae partes constanter adeptus.

(Marcellus built two temples, one for virtue and one for honours. But the latter opened only if you excel as a famous man in daring acts. Since there is only one door that is not open to anybody. He built a temple of virtue before it, as if it were the threshold to the other: what hero will lightly strive after such great rewards of praise, if he has not sweated and endured cold? At first, therefore, the track of virtue is tough, but once conquered it gently leads to sweet honours in the end. Let those who perhaps aspire to eternal glory remember these things, and adorn themselves with sound actions. Which you, more than any

⁴² Livy, *Ab urbe condita* 25, 40: 1–3; 27, 25: 7–9; 29, 11: 13; Plutarch's life of Marcellus, *Vitae*, 314.28.

one else, have achieved with determination; you who has been sent so often as an envoy to all parts of Europe and Asia.)

Bocchi is more informative on the historical details, while Sambucus spells out the moral side of the story. After introducing the example (lines 1–4), Bocchi explains both the historical circumstances of the example (5–10), and then focuses on the general moral implications (11–14). The last two lines are concerned with the relation between the symbol and the dedicatee. In Sambucus' emblem Hercules (as an icon of courage) is absent and the description of the historical situation is less detailed. Throughout his epigram the exclusive and demanding side of achieving honour is stressed. The information about Marcellus' temples is presented first, also mentioning the restricted accessibility (lines 1–5a), and then elaborated in general moral terms (lines 5b–8). The idea that honour can only be achieved by strenuous effort is thus repeated four times in the first ten lines. As in the case of Bocchi, the last two lines are concerned with the dedicatee.

In general, Sambucus does not leave much interpretative space for the reader. This is clearly illustrated by 'Dexter usus' (Right-hand use [203]), which applies the double meaning of right (propitious) and left (unpropitious) to practising medicine. Here, the lack of brevity is not caused by the number of examples, but by the extensive explanation. Sambucus makes absolutely sure the reader will understand the pun:

Est Asclepius hic senex,
 Quo non dexterior fuit.
 Fertur sanguine Gorgonis
 Morbos atque pericula
 Per dextram melius manum
 Curasse atque salubriter:
 Laeva sed potuisse nil
 Praestare, aut potius male.
 [Dextera haec significat modum
 Atque artem, ratio ut mali
 Constet, qui medicus velit
 Aegrum rite periculis
 Tutum reddere, liberum et.]
 Quod sint experientia
 Quidam, non rationibus
 Cauti, qui sine crimine
 Auxerunt mala nescii
 Laevos hos reputes manu.

(This old man is Asclepius, whom nobody surpassed in dexterity. It is said that he has treated diseases and dangers with his right hand by means of the Gorgon's blood quite favourably and to good effect; but that he could not do anything—or rather, only badly—with his left hand. The right-hand indicates that approach and that craft, by which the doctor duly wants to bring the sick safe and free, once the cause of the illness is established. Regarding those who are not prudent through knowledge of the causes but have aggravated diseases by trial: consider them harmful because of their hand.)

The clarity of the argument is achieved by an extensive explanation of the word 'dexter', starting with the words "dextera haec significat modum." Apparently, in practice Sambucus subordinates brevity to communication. As in the previous example, he could have left out the generalisation (the lines between brackets) without affecting the message of the epigram.

In his phrasing Sambucus does not economise either. Some of the word combinations are redundant or at least repetitive: "morbos atque pericula"; "melius [. . .] curasse atque salubriter"; "nil praestare, aut potius male"; "modum atque artem"; and "tutum reddere, liberum et." Evidently, the choice of words should be accommodated to the metrical pattern. A poet has to find the right words in the right place in the metrical pattern. Sambucus' challenge was to maintain a balance between his stylistic ideals and his poetic ability.

Is it fair to conclude that Sambucus did not meet his own standards? It seems that a modern judgement based on Sambucus' criteria (as set out in the preface) would be critical about Sambucus' claim for obscure brevity. But criticising the epigrams on the basis of the preface would be naïve, as we have seen in chapter three. The particular perspective of this text cannot be regarded as a poetical programme. Moreover, the learned character of the work may be reflected in other aspects than a concise style. Apart from brevity, Sambucus had more literary means at his disposal to create the effect he aspired to.

Paradox and Pun

In the final section of this chapter, I shall briefly explore Sambucus' use of two figures of speech that are characteristic of the humanist emblem. As was illustrated by some of the previous examples, the paradox is one of the central figures of speech in humanist emblems.

The author combines seemingly contradictory words or phenomena to surprise and amuse the reader. In the emblematic context paradoxical tension is commonly solved on an allegorical level: the contrast turns out to have a ‘deeper’ relevance.

Sambucus employs numerous paradoxes, playing off many and few, small and large, light and heavy matters against each other. Sometimes the figure becomes visible in the motto, like in ‘Vel minima offendunt’ (Even the small strikes [57]), ‘In copia minor error’ (Less fault in abundance [16]), ‘Neglecta virescunt’ (The neglected flourishes [120]); ‘Sapientia insipiens’ (Unwise wisdom [88]) and ‘Vel levia multitudine clarent’ (Through quantity even light things can bring fame [247]).

Although Sambucus frequently employs the paradox as an emblematic device, his inclination to construct a logical argument modifies its effect. A typical example of this is the epigram of ‘Industria naturam corrigit’ (Diligence improves nature [52]), about the origin of the lyre:

Tam rude et incultum nihil est, industria possit
 Naturae vitium quin poliisse labor.
 Inventam casu cochleam temereque iacentem
 Instruxit nervis nuntius ille Deûm.
 Informem citharam excoluit; nunc gaudia mille
 Et reddit dulces pectine mota sonos.
 Cur igitur quereris, naturam et fingis ineptam?
 Nonne tibi ratio est? muta loquuntur, abi.
 Rite fit e concha testudo, servit utrinque:
 In venerem haec digitis, saepius illa gula.

(Nothing is so rough and uncultivated that diligence and labour cannot refine nature’s error. When that messenger of the gods by chance found a tortoise-shell, lying there without purpose, he provided it with strings. He perfected a shapeless lute: now it gives a thousand joys and it produces sweet sounds when it is moved with the quill. Why then do you complain and conceive of nature as tasteless? Do you not understand? Go away, mute things speak. It is appropriate that the lyre comes from a shell: both serve for love: the one with the fingers, the other more often with the throat.)

The story of Mercury making a lyre of a tortoise shell, is presented as a remarkable paradox: how can something sophisticated be made from something so rough and uncivil (rude et incultum)? Sambucus explains the logic (ratio) behind the relation with a reference to another paradox “muta loquuntur” (mute things speak).

A similar tendency towards clarification can be seen in Sambucus' use of puns. Especially when the puns are applied in a serious context, he usually makes sure that the ambiguity is understood. As we have seen, in 'Dexter usus' the double significance of the words 'dexter' and 'laevus' was thoroughly explained. Almost equally emphatic is the pun on the word 'fugax', meaning both 'swift' and 'fleeing' in the emblem 'Quae sequimur fugimus nosque fugiunt' (We flee from what we are after and it flees from us [20]).⁴³

An interesting and more playful example can be found in 'Fatuis levia committito' (Entrust to fools the trivial things [226]). In the epigram Sambucus addresses the imperial staffing policy. The emblem is dedicated to Leonard von Harrach (1514–1597), a highly influential official, who was at the time *Obersthofmeister* of the Emperor. Sambucus pleads for a restrictive policy towards those who are ambitious but incompetent. When a little boy asks for a horse, Sambucus argues, he will get a hobbyhorse and when he asks for a sword, he will be given a blunt one. Similarly, the incompetent careerist should be given a harmless task. In the *pictura* this person is depicted together with the child and his hobby-horse and a jester. Of course, Sambucus is eager to make clear that baron Von Harrach himself is the opposite of incompetent. For good reason, he argues, the Emperor has put him in charge of his affairs. If at first sight this might seem an unfortunate argument for a complimentary poem, it is, in fact, an ingenious form of flattery. Playing with the ambiguity of the latin 'baro' (idiot and baron) Sambucus highlights the standing of the dedicatee: "Iuste, Baro, te maximus omnium / princeps negotiis praeficit [. . .]" (Rightly the greatest ruler of all [emperor Maximilian II] has placed you at the head of his affairs). Baron Von Harrach himself, in short, is the opposite of a 'baro.'

In conclusion, with all their diversity in subject-matter and metrical patterns, the epigrams in Sambucus' emblems are generally marked by a careful attention for the argument. It is the moral message, rather than the emblematic example that seems to determine his poetics in the first place. For Sambucus, the emblematic example is

⁴³ See also the use of 'fugax' in 'Heroes divini' (Divine heroes [128]) recalling the battle scene from the *Aeneid* (10.633–688) where Turnus thinks he is chasing Aeneas, while in fact it is a phantom. In this way Juno lures her protégé from the battlefield: Aeneas seems to retreat but in fact he is elusive.

nearly always part of a more extensive argument. Therefore, not only the moral lesson, but also the general moral context of the examples is usually articulated in the epigram. His concern for presenting a convincing argument is also apparent in his tendency to use more than one example in a particular poem.

Furthermore, it has become clear that it is hardly profitable to look to either Bocchi or Alciato as the most important model for Sambucus. Inspired by the Greek Anthology the epigrams of all three collections show a great diversity in content and form. The most obvious difference between Sambucus' epigrams and those of Alciato and Bocchi, is his emphasis on a clear, logical argument. In Alciato's concise epigrams the example takes a more central place. The argument is usually concise and frequently elliptical. The structure of Bocchi's symbols is more heterogeneous than that of either Sambucus or Alciato. Unlike Alciato, Bocchi's epigrams share with those of Sambucus a more extensive, dialectic argument. Both Bocchi and Sambucus are inclined to explain their message in clear terms.

The differences in structure correspond to those in style. In spite of what has often been claimed, the obscurity Sambucus values in his preface is not so much reflected in his use of figures. Yet, this assessment should not lead to the conclusion that Sambucus' emblems are particularly transparent. The intelligibility of the emblems is not only determined by their structure and style, but also by the author's use of literary sources, which will be the subject of the next chapter.

CHAPTER SIX

THE USES OF CLASSICAL SOURCES

Rooted in the tradition of the humanist epigram, Sambucus' emblems are immersed in the classics of Greek and Latin literature. The wealth of variety in subject-matter discussed before is also an indication of the variety of sources of the epigrams. The epics of Homer and Virgil, the comedies by Aristophanes, Terence and Plautus, the lyrical poetry of Anacreon and Horace, philosophical treatises by Plato, Seneca and Cicero, the encyclopaedic works of Aristotle, Pliny, Aelian, and Suidas: these, and many other classical texts, are the sources that shaped the epigrams, both in form and in content. The influence of the classics takes many forms. They could be quoted as authorities, alluded to as shared learning, or simply exploited for graphic examples and pithy sententiae.

Here I shall analyse how and to what effect Sambucus transformed particular classical sources to suit his emblems. As the epigrams made by Sambucus formed the starting point for the construction of the emblems, the textual parts will be the main focus of attention. The relationship between the epigrams and the *picturae* will be studied in the next chapter.

First, the use of textual sources will be related to the theoretical concept of intertextuality. This will be done by analysing concrete examples with three focal points in mind: the selection of source texts, their transformation into the emblematic epigram and the possible effect of the use of the classical text. Investigating the selection of material can be revealing, since it reconstructs the author's choice from the original source, and, thus, to a certain extent also what he chose to leave out. As such it can often indicate the space for the intended interpretation. After the selection, the adaptation of the sources to suit the new epigram will be analysed. As was shown in the previous chapter, even though the epigram may be flexible in form and content, it still has its natural limits. Each fragment from another text has to be fit into a new context both in form and in argument. The use of material from other literary genres, such as the epos or prose historiography, each time requires a different

transformation of the original source. The third parameter of researching the use of sources is its effect. To the modern reader it is more difficult to assess the particularities of literary echoes from the classics. This is not only due to a lack of knowledge, but also because of a changed aesthetic and rhetorical climate. The humanist poetic ideals of imitation and emulation are not always compatible with modern aims of originality or consistency in thought. These differences in ways of writing will be further discussed in the section on the tradition of commonplace books.

After this general exploration of Sambucus' compositional practice, we shall look in some detail at two categories of emblematic subjects mentioned by Sambucus in the preface: natural history and history.¹ Although it may not always be possible to determine exact borderlines between the categories, one can distinguish different patterns in the way the particular sources are used.

Finally, it should be stressed that this analysis can by no means provide an exhaustive indication of the *copia* of classical sources of the emblems. In fact, the selected examples reveal only a fraction of the erudition Sambucus displayed. Nor does this study intend to track the full history of particular ideas. The aim here is to explore the process of transformation of classical texts in Sambucus' emblems and to gauge its effects. In spite of these restrictions, the case studies offered here reveal a fascinating side of the emblematic game, which may invite a more comprehensive and systematic philological analysis of the epigrams.

Intertextuality: Selection and Transformation of Sources and its Effects

The theoretical framework of this source analysis is that of intertextual relations. However, without a further specification intertextuality is far from clear as a critical term.² Julia Kristeva's original, post-structuralist concept of the interdependence of meaning in different cultural discourses, has also been used in a much narrower, philo-

¹ Sambucus, *Emblemata*, 'De emblemate', fol. A2ro.; see also chapter three, pp. 94–98. The first category mentioned in this place, that of 'moralia' proper, is in fact difficult to separate from the others.

² For a concise introduction, see Graham Allen, *Intertextuality* (The New Critical Idiom) (London, 2000).

logical interpretation as simply establishing the occurrence of one text in another. In what follows, I intend to present neither an analysis of cultural discourses, nor a list of textual parallels. Instead, the concept of intertextuality is used here to indicate the author's multifarious usage (in selection, transformation and effect) of classical texts as part of the poetics of the humanist epigram.

The most prominent examples of the use of sources are those cases in which the classical source is specifically referred to. In 'Sacra ne violato' (Do not profane what is sacred [244]), for instance, Sambucus starts his emblem on respect for holy places and rituals with a reference to Pausanias:

Aram Pausaniam in summo dicit Olympo
Conspectam, circum quam sacra picta forent.

(Pausanias tells he saw an altar on the top of the Olympus that was surrounded by painted holy objects.)

In the original text Pausanias relates how kites leave the offerings on this altar alone.³ The passage in Pausanias contrasts strongly to the iconoclasm of Sambucus' own age: the *pictura* depicts how people set fire to a contemporary church. By referring to Pausanias' work explicitly, the reader is reminded of his account of classical Greek civilisation. Pausanias' *Description of Greece* would certainly have appealed to the reader with an antiquarian interest. Here, the (scholarly) authority of the classical text strengthens the message of the emblem in quite a direct way. However, this is not a common practice in Sambucus' collection and the names of classical authors appear only in a few instances.⁴

Usually, the dependence on a classical text is not made quite so explicit. Apart from mentioning the source, a range of more implicit intertextual relations can be found. As a first attempt to map this range of relations, we shall here analyse a few cases where knowledge of the classical source is required in order to understand the argument of the epigram. An example of this practice is given in 'Tarde venere bubulci' (The herdsmen have come too late [124]). The emblem deals with the figure of Strepsiades from Aristophanes'

³ Pausanias, *Graeciae descriptio* 5.14.1.

⁴ Compare the reference to Aristotle 'Intestinae simulates' (Internal feuds [179]) and the mention of Plato's objections against Homer in 'Divina humanis non temere miscenda' (Divine matters should not heedlessly be mixed [155]).

comedy, the *Clouds*. In the play Strepsiades' son has incurred heavy debts by horse-racing and gambling. The father tries to discourage the creditors by taking lessons in sophistry at the 'Thinking Institute' run by Socrates. In the epigram this story cannot be related in full. Sambucus only briefly hints at the wider context of the story in the first lines, by mentioning the words 'creditors' and 'clouds'. In the picture we see the scene of Socrates being suspended in the basket he used for contemplation (fig. 19). As a sophist he literally does not have his feet firmly on the ground.

These ingredients are all part of Aristophanes' play, but constitute only fragments of the original story. In the epigram the source text had to be condensed to these few characteristic scenes to fit in the epigrammatic format. Of course, Sambucus did not want to relate Aristophanes' complete story anyway. His intention was to present a particular comic scene as an illustration to a didactic moral. Rather than ridiculing sophistry, which is one of the main themes in the original play, Sambucus here focuses on the comic notion of an old man returning to school. This forms the point of departure for the moral:

Res si digna foret studiis, labor omnibus locatur
 Aetatibus recte nec improbarem.
 Sed fraudesque dolosque senem meditari ineptius nil.
 Ridetur et fit fabula impotenter.

(If something deserves study, it is right to put effort in it at all ages; I would find nothing wrong with that. But nothing is more improper for an old man than framing fraud and deceit: he is laughed at heartily and becomes the town's talk.)

Unlike what the *pictura* suggests, it is not Socrates but the character of Strepsiades who is the subject of this emblematic lesson. It is not a particular philosophical climate that Sambucus criticises, but an old man's false intentions behind learning.

The effect of using Aristophanes' comedy, however, is that of a sense of humour directed at an in-group. With the reference to Strepsiades in the first line of the epigram Sambucus anticipates the reader's knowledge of Aristophanes' play. Strepsiades is not introduced in full. Only the reader who had some schooling in Greek would understand the reference to Aristophanes' play.⁵ Recognising the full story

⁵ After *Wealth*, the *Clouds* was the second best-known play of Aristophanes in the sixteenth century. See K.J. Dover, *Aristophanic Comedy* (London, 1972), pp. 224–229. See also Wilhelm Süss, *Aristophanes und die Nachwelt* (Leipzig, 1911), pp. 20–55.

Tardè venere bubulci.



TARDVS Strepfiades fuerat miser ad dolos notandos,
Queis possit elufisse creditores.
His nam debuerat iuuenis magis artibus vacare,
D enfis nec ista nubibus scrutari.
Res si digna foret studijs, labor omnibus locatur
A etatibus rectè, nec improbarem.
Sed fraudesq₃ dolosq₃ senem meditari ineptius nil.
R idetur, & fit fabula impotenter.
Dulces ergo sciat fatuus bene moribus dicare
D um tempus, atas apta fertq₃, natos.

Im

Fig. 19. Learned laughter about Socrates and Strepsiades in ‘Tardè venere bubulci’ (The herdsmen have come too late [124]); laughing along with the author requires knowledge of Aristophanes’ *Clouds*.

behind the short reference in the epigram surely must have created a pleasing effect, increased by the comic nature of the shared knowledge: the story invites the reader to laugh at Strepsiades' foolish and ridiculous behaviour. This laughter has a distinctly elitist character. It is not a coincidence that the motto refers to a social category: the unsophisticated rustic as opposed to the educated reader.

This type of relation between epigram and its source (i.e. anticipating knowledge of the narrative context of the source) appears in many modifications.⁶ Whereas the emblem about Strepsiades is explicitly concerned with one particular story, Sambucus also inserts many textual echoes that refer to their source more subtly. Sometimes the echo clearly anticipates the learned reader's erudition. In this case, an analysis of the original textual context can reveal an intricate textual game.

An example of such a less obvious textual allusion can be seen in the emblem 'Sapientia insipiens' (Unwise wisdom [88]), favouring practical wisdom over bookish knowledge. The epigram stresses that learning is not the same as wisdom, and that the latter can only be achieved by taking good care of oneself: "Proximus esto tibi, vicinum deinde iuvato" (Keep close to yourself, and then help your neighbour).⁷ Before making this point Sambucus introduces a short comparison to the grindstone, that sharpens the sword, without itself being sharp:

Haud secus ac cotis ferrum, licet ipsa secandi
Exors, communit, donat acumen hebes.

(Precisely as the grindstone strengthens the sword, without itself being able to cut, the blunt makes sharp.)

This comparison is an echo of Horace's words in the *Ars Poetica*:

⁶ A similar form of intertextuality can be seen, for example, in three emblems based on Herodotus: 'Divitiae inutiles' about the story of Xerxes and the plane-tree with the golden leaf (Useless riches [48]), 'Tori reverentia' (Respect for the bed [151]) about Gyges and Candaules and 'Conscia conditio' (Knowing one's position [137]) about the Scythians.

⁷ Quotation from the *Dicta Catonis* I, 40: "Dapsilis interdum notis et largus amicus / Cum fueris, dando semper tibi proximus esto," (Though sometimes on your friends you lavish gear / In giving always to yourself keep near); text and translation taken from J.W. Duff, A.M. Duff (eds.), *Minor Latin Poets*, vol. 2 (Cambridge Mass., 1982), pp. 602–603.

[. . .] ego fungar vice cotis, acutum
 reddere quae ferrum valet exors ipsa secandi;
 munus et officium, nil scribens ipse, docebo,
 unde parentur opes, quid alat formetque poetam,
 quid deceat, quid non, quo virtus, quo ferat error. (304–308)

(So I'll play a whetstone's part, which makes steel sharp, but of itself cannot cut. Though I write naught myself, I will teach the poets office and duty; whence he draws his stores; what nurtures and fashions him; what befits him and what not; whither the right course leads and whither the wrong.)⁸

With the grindstone and the wording of the simile the learned reader is reminded of the context of Horace's original use of the same simile. In contrast to the previous example it is not impossible to understand the epigram without identifying the source of this simile.⁹

What could have been the effect on the reader who recognised this passage from Horace? In Horace's didactic letter on how to write poetry the simile serves as a modest way of indicating the author's authority. Sambucus does not take the same personal stand and his epigram does not deal with poetry in particular. Rather, his emblem questions the ethical value of erudition *per se*. Just like Horace, however, Sambucus wanted to teach something to his readers. With Horace he added the weight of classical authority to his own argument. Thus, paradoxically, Horace's pedagogical simile is reused to stress that erudition in itself is not enough to attain wisdom.

Similarly, in an emblem about a false friend, entitled 'Animi sub vulpe latentes' (The hidden mind of the fox [171]), there is no significant interaction between the context of the source of the motto and the tenor of the emblem. Sambucus' lesson is a general warning against flattery and false friends. The motto is again taken from Horace's *Ars Poetica*:

Ut qui conducti plorant in funere dicunt
 Et faciunt prope plura dolentibus ex animo, sic
 Derisor vero plus laudatore movetur.

⁸ Trans. H. Rushton Fairclough (Cambridge Mass., 1936).

⁹ Two examples of a similar use of quotations in motto's are 'De oblivione et ferula Baccho dicata. Odi memorem compotorem' (About forgetfulness and the dedication of the stick fennel to Bacchus. I hate a drinking companion with a good memory [69]), quoting Martial's epigram 1.27.7 (see also Erasmus, *Adages* 1.7.1); and 'Οὐκ ἔστι μιᾶσματος γῆρας' (There is no old age for defilement [185]), taken from Aeschylus' *The Seven Against Thebes* line 682.

Reges dicuntur multus urgere culullis
 Et torquere mero, quem perspexisse laborent,
 An sit amicitia dignus: si carmina condes,
 Numquam te fallent animi sub vulpe latentes. (431–437)

(As hired mourners at a funeral say and do almost more than those who grieve at heart, so the man who mocks is more moved than the true admirer. Kings, we are told, ply with many a bumper and test with wine the man they are anxious to see through, whether he be worthy of their friendship. If you mean to fashion verses, never let the intent that lurks beneath the fox ensnare you.)¹⁰

Although the expression is clearly a literal quotation from Horace, it does not seem to refer to the poetical context of the original. In fact, in this particular phrase Horace himself probably alluded to the fable of the fox and the crow.¹¹ Sambucus does not concentrate on the harmful effects for poets only. Still, the use of the motto would have had some effect with the readers and their familiarity with Horace's text would certainly have reminded them of the original. Moreover, similar to the previous case, both texts are part of a didactic discourse. In this way Horace's authority could contribute to the persuasive force of Sambucus' argument.

Apart from openly anticipating knowledge of the source in question or implicitly referring to it as an authority, there are also more intricate interactions between Sambucus' epigrams and their classical sources. The use of Horace in 'Celata virtus ignavia est' (Hidden virtue is cowardice [215]) is a case in point. In this emblem Sambucus emphasises the need to publish books about learning and the exemplary deeds of good leaders:

Quid doctrina potest nisi publica scripta supersint?
 Gesta ducum reticet si bona posteritas?
 Aurum dum latitat nil venis atque cavernis
 Profuerit, fulvae ni effodiantur opes.
 Sic virtus celata parum commendat honores
 Nec magis ac mensa tecta lucerna micat.
 Ingenio praestans, raris virtutibus auctus,
 Proferat in lucem pignora: clarus erit.

¹⁰ Translated by H. Rushton Fairclough (Cambridge Mass., 1936). The expression about the fox is textually problematic though: see C.O. Brink's commentary, *Horace on Poetry. The 'Ars Poetica'* (Cambridge, 1971), p. 411.

¹¹ Aesop, ed. Chambry, no. 166. Otto included the expression in his collection of proverbs, see *Sprichwörter*, p. 379, no. 1939.

(What power does learning have, if there would be no publications left? What power do the good deeds of leaders have, if posterity would keep silent about them? As long as gold is hidden, if the yellow treasure is not excavated, it will be of no use whatsoever to the caves and veins. Similarly, hidden virtue will not particularly recommend reputations and a lamp concealed beneath a table will not shine very bright. Let him who has an excellent mind and who is endowed with exceptional qualities bring proofs to light; he will be brilliant.)

The virtue intended in this emblem refers to exemplary behaviour and literary talent. The motto is a slight variation of a line from Horace's ode in praise of Lollius (4,9): "Paulum sepultae distat inertiae / celata virtus" (litterally: "Hidden virtue differs little from buried cowardice").

The effect of the use of this image in the emblem can only be gauged when the full context of Horace's ode is taken into account. This poem, consisting of 52 lines, is concerned with praising both the value of poetry (lines 1–30) and the personality of the addressee, Lollius (30–52). In the first half of the poem, concerned with the effect of poetry, Horace makes two points. He opens with much self-confidence by saying that his lyrical words will survive:

Ne forte credas interitura, quae
 Longe sonantem natus ad Aufidum
 Non ante vulgatas per artes
 Verba loquor socianda chordis: (1–4)

(Think not the words will perish which I, born near far-sounding Aufidus, utter for linking with the lyre, by arts not hitherto revealed.)

He situates his work in the realm of the great lyric poets of the time, mentioning Pindar, Simonides, Alcaeus, Stesichorus, Anacreon and Sappho). The epic classics of Homer may remain unsurpassed, but that, he claims, does not render the (lyric) works of others superfluous. Secondly, he states that deeds and events that are not eternalised by a poet will be forgotten. The heroes of today (he mentions Helen, Teucer, Idomeneus, Sthenelus, Hector, Deiphobus, and Agememnon, respectively) are not necessarily the only ones that have experienced great adventures. Probably there have been countless others, Horace observes, but they simply are not remembered anymore:

Vixere fortes ante Agememnona
 Multi; sed omnes illacrimabiles

Urgentur ignotique longa
 Nocte, carent quia vate sacro. (25–28)

(But all are overwhelmed in unending night, unwept, unknown, because they lack a sacred bard.)

In the second part of the poem the focus shifts to the dedicatee. Lollius will *not* be forgotten, because Horace is there to eternalise his personality:

Paulum sepultae distat inertiae
 Celata virtus. Non ego te meis
 Chartis inornatum silebo,
 Totve tuos patiar labores
 Impune, Lolli, carpere lividas
 Obliviones. [. . .] (29–34)

(In the tomb, hidden worth differs little from cowardice. Not thee, O Lollius, will I leave unsung, unhonoured by my verse; nor will I suffer envious forgetfulness to prey undisturbed upon thy many exploits.)¹²

The remainder of the poem is devoted to praising Lollius' character. The lines Sambucus alludes to are taken from the heart of Horace's ode, and constitute an essential step in the argument. It is clear that Sambucus did not simply choose the motto as an elegant phrase to embellish his argument. Although only the motto is a direct quotation from the ode, Horace's line of reasoning pervades the entire emblem. A closer look at the transformation will show how Horace's text is set in a humanist moral framework.

In the first place there is a difference in purpose between Horace's text and that of Sambucus. Whereas the former intends his poem to be a tribute to a politician and statesman (Marcus Lollius Palicanus was a former consul and governor of several provinces), Sambucus' emblem is not a laudatory poem on one person in particular. It has the broader aims of making the readers aware of the importance of literary testimonies (and hence of capable writers and scholars) and that of encouraging talented humanists to use their talents.

Horace's desire for immortality of his poetry could clearly not be presented as a virtuous ambition in Sambucus' Christian age. Instead the importance of literature (here in the broad sense of testimonies

¹² Translated by C.E. Bennett (Cambridge Mass., 1978); see furthermore the commentary by E.C. Wickham (Oxford, 1891), pp. 282–286.

of acts and learning) is comprised in Horace's expression of 'celata virtus'. In the emblem the moral need for using one's literary talents is underlined. In this way literary ambition is connected to virtue. This is elaborated with the biblical image of the lamp that should not be put under a bushel: people should let their lights shine.¹³ In this sense, 'celata virtus' refers to the humanist who does not use his talents by publishing books.

But in the emblem hidden virtue does not only indicate the need to use one's literary talents. As in Horace the words also refer to the great achievements of the past. When this type of virtue is not recorded it will fall into the same oblivion as a lack of virtue will do. In making this point, Sambucus is again not so much concerned with personal glory. Whereas Horace presented to Lollius the example of famous individuals, Sambucus does not mention names. Moreover, he does not only write about heroic deeds, but about exemplary acts of leaders (*bona gesta ducum*) and about learning (*doctrina*).

One can imagine that the use of Horace's ode may have had two different effects on the well-read reader of Sambucus' emblem. On the one hand there is the instructive play with the original text: Sambucus replaces the emphasis on immortality in Horace's argument by a Christian justification. On the other hand, Sambucus' use of the Horatian phrase (not only stories untold, but also neglected talents) will have reminded the reader of Horace's verses on famous classical poets and heroes, and of the claim for immortality in the opening lines. Sambucus may have changed Horace's argument, but the original ode will still have resounded. Thus, though itself expressed in a morally correct argument, Sambucus' emblem can recall the ideals of immortality, pride and glory of Horace's ode.

In the cases where there is a more intricate interaction between the epigram and its source, the relation between them is also determined by the nature of the source. A philosophical prose text, for example, does not only require a different transformation than a

¹³ See Matthew 5:14–16: 'You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven' (translation: New International Version, 1973); for the image of the lamp, see furthermore Mark 4:21–25 and Luke 8:16–18.

lyric poem, it will also evoke more discursive interpretations from the reader. An example of this is ‘Benignitas’ (Kindness [35]), dedicated to Juraj Draskovics, bishop of Pécs (fig. 20). The emblem promotes generosity and sharing. It elaborates on the Greek proverb Τὰ τῶν φίλων κοινά (Friends have all in common), also prevalent in Latin as ‘Amicorum communia omnia’.¹⁴

According to the epigram, the rich will not lose anything by sharing money. This point is rephrased metaphorically several times. First, the act of sharing money is implicitly compared to the effect of digging a hole: the deeper the hole, the bigger the pile next to it. This example is represented in the *pictura*, together with a coffer from which two men are taking money. In a second analogy sharing is compared to a flame that does not weaken when used for kindling another light. Also, the epigram criticises those who treat their money as a god (‘nummi pro numine’) and deny others the water of a spring.

The combination of some of the proverbs and the flame metaphor directs us to Cicero’s *De Officiis* (On Obligations). One of Cicero’s most influential and widely-read philosophical works in the Renaissance, this treatise searches for ethical precepts to realise the ideals of honour and glory. It is written for his son Marcus, and, more generally for the young Roman aspiring to a political career. In three books, Cicero discusses the honourable (book one) and the useful (book two) conduct and their potential conflicts (book three).¹⁵

The place Sambucus turned to for his emblem is part of a section devoted to beneficence in the first book (I, 42–60). Cicero here formulates three rules for generous giving: in the first place, it must not harm anyone (42–43), secondly it should not exceed the giver’s means (44), and, thirdly, it should always be guided by the worthiness of the recipient and his needs (45–60). For this last rule, which is the most important one for our analysis of the emblem, Cicero further distinguishes three criteria by which this worthiness can be

¹⁴ Otto, *Sprichwörter*, p. 20, no. 87; it is the first proverb in Erasmus’ *Adagia*. See volume 2.1 of the *Opera omnia* edited by M.L. van Poll-Van de Lisdonk (a.o.), (Amsterdam, 1993), pp. 84–87.

¹⁵ On Cicero’s *De Officiis*, see the introduction in Andrew R. Dyck, *A Commentary on Cicero, De Officiis* (Ann Arbor, 1996), pp. 1–56 and furthermore the introduction to the English translation by P.G. Walsh, *On Obligations* (Oxford, 2000), pp. ix–lii.

Benignitas.
Ad Georg. Drascouith. Episcopum.
Quinqueclesiens.



*QVANTO plus terræ effoditur, scrobs crescit hiatus:
 Et tumulus maior prominet indicio.
 Diuitias alijs si quis communicat amplas,
 Non sit pauperior, statq; benigna manus.
 Dispereant quorum numi pro numine habentur,
 Vicinisq; negant omine fontis aquas.
 In tenebris cur non capiat sibi lumen egenus,
 Num fit flamma minor? num quoque terra satis?
 Κοινὰ φίλων dicas si Cræσι ingentia tractes,
 Aut bona Pactoli, possideasûe Tagum.*

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Fig. 20. In 'Benignitas' (Kindness [35]) the epigram echoes classical texts and a medieval song from the *carmina burana*.

gauged: character (46), goodwill and favours received from the person in question (47–49), and community and human fellowship (50–60). It is this last criterion where the metaphor of the flame and the proverb about friendship are used. Thus, Sambucus seems to allude to this passage in the section of Cicero's treatise in the first place.

In this section, Cicero makes a distinction between different sorts of fellowship. He first mentions the most general kind of fraternity that exists between humans because of man's ability to reason (*ratio*) and to speak (*oratio*). This in itself invites a certain level of liberality. Under this bond, therefore, each individual has a right to "all things that Nature has produced," insofar as it is not "assigned as private property by the statutes and by civil law":

Ac latissime quidem patens hominibus inter ipsos, omnibus inter omnes societas haec est. In qua omnium rerum quas ad communem hominum usum natura genuit est servanda communitas, ut quae descripta sunt legibus et iure civili, haec ita teneantur ut sit constitutum legibus ipsis, cetera sic observentur ut in Graecorum proverbio est amicorum esse communia omnia. Omnium autem communia hominum videntur ea quae sunt generis eius quod ab Ennio positum in una re transferri in permultas potest.

*Homo qui erranti comiter monstrat viam,
Quasi lumen de suo lumine accendat facit,
Nihilo minus ipsi lucet, cum illi accenderit.*

Una ex re satis praecipit, ut quidquid sine detrimento commodari possit, id tribuatur vel ignoto. (52) Ex quo sunt illa communia: non prohibere aqua profluente, pati ab igne ignem capere, si qui velit, consilium fidele deliberanti dare, quae sunt iis utilia qui accipiunt, danti non molesta. Quare et his utendum est et semper aliquid ad communem utilitatem afferendum. Sed quoniam copiae parvae singulorum sunt, eorum autem qui iis egeant infinita est multitudo, vulgaris liberalitas referenda est ad illum Ennii finem, 'nihilominus ipsi lucet', ut facultas sit qua in nostros simus liberales.

(This, then, is the most comprehensive bond that unites together men as men and all to all; and under it the common right to all things that Nature has produced for the common use of man is to be maintained, with the understanding that, while everything assigned as private property by the statutes and by civil law shall be so held as prescribed by those same laws, everything else shall be regarded in the light indicated by the Greek proverb: 'Amongst friends all things in common'. Furthermore, we find the common property of all men in things of the sort defined by Ennius; and, though restricted by him to one instance, the principle may be applied very generally:

*Who kindly sets a wand'rer on his way
Does e'en as if he lit another's lamp by his:
No less shines his, when he his friend's hath lit.*

In this example he effectively teaches us all to bestow even upon a stranger what it costs us nothing to give. On this principle we have the following maxims:

'Deny no one the water that flows by'; 'Let anyone who will take fire from our fire'; 'Honest counsel give to one who is in doubt'; for such acts are useful to the recipient and cause the giver no loss. We should, therefore, adopt these principles and always be contributing something to the common weal. But since the resources of individuals are limited and the number of the needy is infinite, this spirit of universal liberality must be regulated according to that test of Ennius—'No less shines his'—in order that we may continue to have the means for being generous to our friends.)¹⁶

After this general category of communion, Cicero furthermore distinguishes the tighter fellowship between people from the same region, and, the closest form, the special association between members of one family. In Sambucus' epigram the proverb and the simile echo Cicero's criterion of the worthiness of the receiver of generous giving. By taking the examples of fire and water it refers most notably to the type of worthiness based on a general bond between humans. But probably the epigram then also reminds the reader of the other forms of fellowship in Cicero's hierarchy of relations. The reference to the proverb about sharing among *friends* implicitly confirms the social coherence of Sambucus' readership.

In this way the epigram serves different readers at the same time. In the first place, the general audience heard in the emblem a suitable echo of Cicero's precepts in support of human liberality in general, and between members of specific circles in particular. But simultaneously, the emblem was dedicated to the politically influential compatriot Draskovic, who before becoming bishop of Pécs had been vice-chancellor of the Hungarian kingdom. He could read Sambucus' emblem as an elegant request for generosity. According to Cicero's model, his learned compatriot Sambucus was evidently worthy of a particular form of liberality.

¹⁶ *De Officiis* I.52; translated by Walter Miller, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge Mass., 1913).

However, Sambucus did not only use Cicero's philosophical work to construct his epigram. The pun on the worship of money (*nummi pro numine*) can be found in a song (*Utar contra vitia*) on the corruption of the church which is part of the collection of *Carmina burana*:

Solam avaritiam Rome nevit Parca:
 parcit danti munera, parco non est parca,
 nummus est pro numine et pro Marco marca,
 et est minus celebris ara quam sit arca.

(Parca [the goddess of fate] has gathered only avarice in Rome, which is favourable to those who give gifts; it does not spare the stingy one. Money replaces divinities, and so does mark instead of Mark. The altar is less revered than the coffer.)¹⁷

In the age of the Reformation this was evidently an important issue. Even without the original context the remark would have added a political element to the moral message. However, given the fact that sixteenth-century students could be expected to know the songs of the *Carmina burana* by heart, the line could very well allude to the satirical character of the original song. In any case Draskovic would be aware of the responsibility of the church for a sound financial policy.

The political or at least societal perspective of the epigram suits the context of Cicero's *De Officiis*. It was not automatically connected to the proverb on sharing among friends. Erasmus, for example, does not discuss this political interpretation in his lemma on the proverb. He cites from another satirical epigram, written by Martial. Here a rich man, named Candidus, is scorned for his luxurious way of life and the lack of generosity towards his friends:

Κοινὰ φίλων haec sunt, haec sunt tua, Candide, κοινά¹⁸
 Quae tu magniloquus nocte dieque sonas?
 [. . .]
 Das nihil et dicis, Candide, κοινὰ φίλων?

(‘Friends have all in common.’ Is this, is this, Candidus, that ‘all in common’ which you night and day mouth pompously? [. . .] you give nothing and then say, Candidus, ‘Friends have all in common?’)¹⁹

¹⁷ For the complete Latin text of ‘Utar contra vitia’ see *Carmina Burana* edited by Alfons Hilka and Otto Schumann, vol. 1 (Heidelberg, 1930), no. 42, pp. 76–83, and vol. 2 (commentary). Translation from Tuomas M.S. Lehtonen, *Fortuna, Money, and the Sublunar World. Twelfth-Century Ethical Poetics and the Satirical Poetry of the Carmina Burana* (Helsinki, 1995), p. 152.

¹⁸ Erasmus here renders ‘Candide, κοινὰ φίλων sunt haec tua, Candide, πάντα’.

¹⁹ Martial, *Epigrams* 2.43, translated by Walter C.A. Ker, Loeb Classical Library, revised edn. (Cambridge Mass., 1968).

There is not a trace of Martial's personal criticism in Sambucus' epigram. The final lines of his epigram constitute a general appeal to the rich for generosity:

Κοινὰ φίλων dicas si Croesi ingentia tractes,
Aut bona Pactoli possideasque Tagum.

(You should say 'Friends have all in common' when you have the wealth of Croesus, or the goods of Pactolus, or when you own the Tagus.)

The expression of wealth in this line is again couched in classical images. It does not refer, however, to one source in particular. Croesus' wealth and the golden rivers Pactolus and Tagus are widely used symbols for richness.²⁰ It corresponds to Cicero's remark that liberality should be guided by the possibilities of the giver (44 and the final remark in 52).

In composing the epigram Sambucus selected the part from Cicero that he could use best: the passage where liberality was discussed in terms of the recipient's worthiness and social responsibility. The transformation of this philosophical prose requires a different approach than in the case of Horace. Not surprisingly, the concise and illustrative sententiae prove to be more suitable for the epigram than the abstract parts of Cicero's argument. In inventing an emblem about generosity Sambucus wanted to present more concrete examples. The metaphor about digging a hole, represented in the picture, is not from Cicero. It seems to be Sambucus' own contribution to vivify the argument with a visual example. Finally, the reference to the *Carmina Burana* not only gives the epigram a political edge, but also adds a musical dimension.

Similar patterns of selection and condensation can be seen in 'Sera parsimonia' (Frugality that comes too late [87], fig. 21) highlighting the virtuous side of frugality. Whereas sharing is a virtue for the rich, the poor should be watchful not to spend too much. Elaborating the saying that "it is better to spare at the brim than at the bottom," the epigram urges the reader to control his spending before the reserves have run out: There should always be some means available for hard times.

²⁰ Otto, *Sprichwörter*, p. 261, no. 1320; see also Erasmus' *Adagia* I.6.75 (Pactoli opes).



Fig. 21. Selection and condensation of Seneca's thought in 'Sera parsimonia' (Frugality that comes too late [87]).

The motto is clearly an echo of the dictum ‘sera parsimonia in fundo est’ (It is too late to be thrifty when the bottom has been reached) attested in Seneca’s first letter to Lucilius.²¹ In fact, the abridged version of the saying invites the reader to finish it. However, where the emblem refers to financial prudence only, Seneca had used the expression in a philosophical context.

In his first letter to Lucilius Seneca reflects on the proper attitude towards time. Time all too easily elapses and therefore, he argues, one should spend his time with judgement. Nothing is worse than wasting time because of negligence. Instead, one should seize each hour and be occupied by the present day, so that one becomes less dependent on the next day, which may never come. Couched in *sententiae* like “Dum differtur, vita transcurrit” (While we are postponing, life speeds by) and “Omnia, Lucili, aliena sunt, tempus tantum nostrum est” (Nothing, Lucilius, is ours, except time) Seneca develops the idea of accounting for one’s time in the same way as for one’s finances. In explaining how he tries to accomplish this himself, Seneca elaborates this analogy with bookkeeping:

Quod apud luxuriosum sed diligentem evenit, ratio mihi constat inpen-sae. Non possum dicere nihil perdere, sed quid perdam et quare et quemadmodum dicam; causas paupertatis meae reddam, sed evenit mihi, quod plerisque non suo vitio ad inopiam redactis: omnes ignoscunt, nemo succurrit.

(My expense account balances, as you would expect from one who is free-handed but careful. I cannot boast that I waste nothing, but I can at least tell you what I am wasting, and the cause and manner of the loss; I can give you the reasons why I am a poor man. My situation, however, is the same as that of many who are reduced to slender means through no fault of their own: every one forgives them, but no one comes to their rescue.)²²

The awareness of ownership is more important than the actual riches. This is the original context of the motto ‘Sera parsimonia’. Ending the letter with an elegant summary of this argument, Seneca urges Lucilius to be frugal before it is too late.²³

²¹ Seneca, *Epistolae* 1,5; Otto, *Sprichwörter* 149, no. 734.

²² *Ibidem*, caput 4; translation of Richard M. Gummere, Loeb Classical Library (London-New York, 1917).

²³ “Quid ergo est? non puto pauperem cui quantulumcumque superest sat est; tu tamen malo serves tua, et bono tempore incipies. Nam ut visum est maioribus

In Sambucus' emblem, the theme of the letter is reduced to the metaphor only. He articulates the *sensus litteralis*, and is silent about a possible *sensus spiritualis*. His argument is restricted to the practical ethical question of how to handle money. As in the previous example the answer is again unequivocally direct, even though the epigram ends with a plea for avoiding too anxious forms of parsimony. There is no explicit reference to a metaphorical interpretation of the epigram.

This does not, of course, rule out the possibility that the learned reader would be reminded of the metaphor behind the practical advice. After all, parsimony was an accepted image for the existential attitude described by Seneca. Erasmus, for instance, calls the philosophical interpretation of the saying "more elegant."²⁴ He advises to use it, for example, when warning youths against wasting their time. Regardless of its concrete message, Sambucus' epigram would be readily associated with the philosophical interpretation of parsimony.

Apart from the motto another intertextual reference is present in the first line of the epigram. "Semper eris pauper [. . .]" is a quotation of a short epigram by Martial:

Semper pauper eris, si pauper es, Aemiliane:
dantur opes nullis nunc nisi divitibus.

(You will always be poor, if you are poor, Aemilianus. Wealth is given today to none, save the rich.)²⁵

Martial's epigram does not deal with frugality and its satirical portée hardly matches the point Sambucus wants to make. The cynical observation indicates a point of political criticism rather than an ethical stance. But despite the different tenor of the epigram, its first words form an attractively expressed warning for Sambucus to start his epigram with.

nostris, 'sera parsimonia in fundo est'; non enim tantum minimum in imo sed pessimum remanet. Vale." (What is the state of things, then? It is this, I do not regard a man as poor, if the little which remains is enough for him. I advise you, however, to keep what is really yours; and you cannot begin too early. For, as our ancestors believed, it is too late to spare when you reach the dregs of the cask. Of that which remains at the bottom, the amount is slight and the quality is vile. Farewell.) Trans. Gummere.

²⁴ *Adagia* 2.2.64; Erasmus, *Opera omnia*, vol. 2 (Leiden: J. Clericus, 1703; reprint Hildesheim, 1961), p. 469: "Erit elegantior sententia, si traducatur ad res animi [. . .]."

²⁵ Martial, *Epigrammata* 5.81; trans. Ker.

As a final example in this section yet another emblem on money will serve. ‘Versura inextricabilis’ (The intricate exchange of creditors [90], fig. 22) exposes the stupidity of having different loans at the same time. Solving debts by making new ones does not help anything. The moral point of the argument goes beyond the financial sphere. It is foolish to strut in borrowed plumes. Rather, one should be content with one’s own, modest means. Although closely related to the previous examples in theme, the relation of the epigram to the ancient sources is more obscure.

First, the expression ‘vorsuram solvere’ (exchanging one creditor for another, by borrowing to pay a debt) is proverbial for the exchange of one problem for another.²⁶ Terence used the phrase in his comedy *Phormio*:

quid fiet? in eodem luto haesitas; vorsuram solves,
Geta: praesens quod fuerat malum in diem abiit: plagae, crecunt,
nisi prospicis.

(What will be done? You’re stuck in the old mud; you borrowed to pay and must pay back for the borrowing, Geta. What was the present trouble is off for the day, but the score of stripes runs up unless you look out.)²⁷

There is no indication that Sambucus alludes to Terence’s comic setting. The expression is regularly used later, and is also included in Erasmus’ *Adages*.²⁸ Sambucus’ comparison to strutting in borrowed plumes, however, clearly alludes to Aesop’s fable of the jackdaw that took on the feathers of other birds in order to impress Zeus. Although the expression (in different variants, both Greek and Latin) was also commonly used as a general saying, this is the only important source of the expression as a metaphor for borrowing.²⁹ The echo of Aesop’s fable is effectively phrased in one line (‘si plumis alienis induor’). These words are enough to evoke the plot of the classical story.

²⁶ *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, s.v. 3; Otto, *Sprichwörter*, pp. 201–202, no. 994.

²⁷ Terence, *Phormio*, lines 780–782; trans. John Sargeant, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge Mass., 1912).

²⁸ *Adagia* 1.10.23; see volume 2.1 of the *Opera omnia* edited by M.L. van Poll-Van de Lisdonk, M. Cytowska (Amsterdam, 1998), pp. 430–433.

²⁹ Aesop, *Fabulae*, no. 162 (κολοιδὸς καὶ ὄρνεα) ed. Emile Chambry (Paris, 1927). Phaedrus rendered Aesop’s fable with a more general moralisation about boasting with other’s goods (Phaedrus, *Fabulae Aesopiae* 1.3). See furthermore Otto, *Sprichwörter*, p. 15, no. 64.



Fig. 22. Practical economics in 'Versura inextricabilis' (The intricate exchange of creditors [90]).

The concept of borrowing can be interpreted in the same light as the previous examples. Again, Sambucus does not openly hint at a *sensus spiritualis*. It depends on the reader's frame of reference, whether it is taken as a concrete message about financial matters or as a metaphor on man's attitude towards life.

It is clear that the effects of interweaving fragments from classical literature can best be gauged when the narrative and rhetorical context of the originals is taken into account. The relation between source and epigram can range from a more or less straightforward borrowing of plots, or anticipating knowledge of the original on the part of the reader, to a more concealed play of allusions. Especially in the latter case, the treatment of the original can have a variety of effects, which to a large extent must have determined the reader's amusement.

Also in cases where the intertextual relation is not necessarily intended by the author, it remains relevant to observe the transformation of the source in a new emblematic argument. However, the effects of intertextual relations do not necessarily apply in all occurrences of a classical fragment in the emblems. The commonplace tradition points out that the impact of intertextuality should be balanced against the method of writing at the time.

The Tradition of Commonplace-Books

The reuse of classical texts can be seen as a fundamental part of the humanist art of writing in general. Significantly, as an important help in writing in the aspired style the humanists developed the practice of commonplacing.

Commonplace books are collections of mostly Latin quotations ordered in categories.³⁰ Compiling a personal book of quotations was an important part of the sixteenth-century classroom practice. Students were expected to amass classical expressions and ideas and use them for their own compositions. Later, printed commonplace books

³⁰ See Ann Moss, *Printed Commonplace-Books and the Structuring of Renaissance Thought* (Oxford, 1996); for the connection with emblems, see her 'Emblems into Commonplaces: The Anthologies of Josephus Langius' in: Enenkel-Visser, *Mundus Emblematicus*, pp. 1–16.

appeared, often with an alphabetical index. Although not a commonplace book in the strictest sense of the word, Erasmus' *Adages*, a vast collection of proverbs and maxims (with commentary), should be mentioned in this same context. Reproducing classical quotations was not only a perfect way to acquire correct Latin, but also an ideal aid in moral education.

Obviously, the use of commonplace books affects both the way of reading and writing. The reader organised the information in what he read according to specific headings. These categories structured the (often young) reader's intellectual horizon. Different classifications were possible. In his work on the abundant style, *De Copia*, Erasmus, for instance, favoured a division into similars and opposites, as serving best the goals in rhetorical texts. Later the virtues and sins provided a popular framework for organising quotations. This particular organising system is also applied in the 1551 edition of Alciato's emblems, which clearly connects the emblem to the commonplace book tradition.³¹

Commonplace books were not only an organisational help to the reader, but to the writer as well. The books supplied a wealth of ordered material, that was not only useful to embellish the text on a stylistic level, but also served as a repository of rhetorical material. Writers thus could easily find arguments in support of their own goals.

The genre of the emblem has a special relation to the commonplace tradition, as becomes clear for example in the use of emblem books as collections of commonplaces. Several editions of Alciato's emblems, for example, have been ordered according to *loci communes*, starting with the 1548-edition (Rouille-Bonhomme, Lyon), and Bocchi's

³¹ See also Buck's assessment of Sambucus' ethical stance. Buck places the emblems in the category of 'Einfachen Sittlichkeit' aimed at practical correctness in a social context: "Zu einem anständigen Leben in der Erfüllung der Pflichten und im Verkehr mit den Mitmenschen wollen die *Emblemata* durch Ratschläge und Empfehlungen erziehen, die oft in die bündige Form von einprägsamen Sentenzen und Dicta komprimiert werden und zwar nicht nur in den 'inscriptiones', sondern auch in einzelnen Versen der 'subscriptions.'" (37) In the connection between emblems and the tradition of compilation literature, Buck concentrates on a common moral use: "So entsteht eine wenn auch fragmentarische Lebenslehre, die dem Menschen helfen will, sein Dasein im Spannungsfeld zwischen Sosein und Seinsollen zu bewältigen." Thus, in spite of coining it a 'fragmentary' ideology, Buck still assumes that the selection criteria are based upon a certain underlying ideological coherence, which is in fact difficult to assess.

book of symbols has extensive indexes which enabled the reader to use it for commonplacing. The emblem writers themselves were also working with commonplace books. Virginia Callahan, for example, has written about the relation between Alciato's emblems and Erasmus' *Adages*, while Hans Luijten has revealed Jacob Cats' prolific use of Josephus Langius' *Polyanthea nova*.³²

The practice of commonplacing puts the concept of intertextuality and the idea of sources into perspective. The use of classical quotations does not automatically allude to their original context. The significance of identifying a classical source in the emblems should therefore be regarded case by case. When, for example, Sambucus coined one of his emblems 'Nusquam tuta fides', the reader would immediately have recognised this sententia and probably also knew its origin, Dido's bitter lamentations in Virgil's *Aeneid*.³³ But the phrase had become a *locus* in itself and was not necessarily always associated with the original context.

Moreover, it is unlikely that the original context of Dido's words contributes anything to the meaning of the new text (fig. 23). The general message of the emblem is to be watchful at any time. In illustrating his argument he employs the famous example of the elephant captured by a hunter while sleeping against a tree. For the powerful animal one moment of weakness is fatal. Sambucus furthermore mentions the story of Atalanta, beaten by Hippomenes with the help of Venus' golden apples. Here again, the example illustrates not so much Dido's complaint about unreliability as the need to be vigilant. Finally, the epigram refers to Medea's revenge on king Pelias by persuading his daughters to treat their father with a special, but fatal rejuvenating cure. In all three examples the victims are deceived by tricks. The sententia from Virgil captures the plea for alertness in a concise way, but does not establish a form of interaction between the emblem and the broader context of the *Aeneid*.

³² Virginia Woods Callahan, "The Erasmus-Alciato Friendship," in *Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Lovaniensis*, ed. J. IJsewijn, E. Keßler (Louvain-Munich, 1973), pp. 133-141; idem, "Erasmus' *Adages*. A Pervasive Element in the *Emblems* of Alciato," *Emblematica* 9,2 (1995), 241-256; Jacob Cats, *Minne- en Sinnebeelden: Een Studie-Uitgave met Inleiding en Commentaar*, ed. Hans Luijten (Monumenta literaria neerlandica) vol. 2 (The Hague, 1996), pp. 62-69.

³³ Virgil, *Aeneid* 4.373.



Fig. 23. Elephants can best be caught when they are asleep: 'Nusquam tuta fides' (Faith is never safe [158]) about the need to be watchful.

In analysing the sources of the emblems, therefore, both the richness of possible intertextual relations and the fragmented use of sources in commonplaces should be taken into account. In the next sections two case studies will be presented on the use of classical sources from different categories of subject-matter.

Natural History

When Sambucus employs natural history in his emblems he treats his sources differently from the way in which he does historical, mythological or philosophical subjects. This is triggered by the organisation of the material in the different sources and the way it is presented. Encyclopaedic works like Aristotle's *De historia animalium*, Pliny's *Historia Naturalis* and Aelian's *De natura animalium* provided a wealth of facts and peculiarities about the living world. For this reason the texts constituted a useful repertory of emblematic subjects. The presentation of the *res emblematica*, however, required a thorough stylistic transformation. Unlike Cicero's and Seneca's prose, natural historians wrote in a pragmatic and functional style devoid of *sententiae* or elegant metaphors. Consequently, Sambucus' use of these sources is not reflected in literal quotations.

Within the poetic boundaries, however, Sambucus approached the subject in a similar, scholarly way. His observation of nature is marked by an inquisitive, critical attitude: the emblems investigate the reasons for particular phenomena, sometimes suggesting different explanations, and sometimes openly questioning the probability of the information passed down. Sambucus' frequent use of Greek terms is another characteristic of this attitude.

Furthermore, the composition of emblems involved moralisation. In this respect Sambucus' aim in studying nature differed from that of the classical sources. In the emblems natural history is not only meant to describe interesting features from nature, but is particularly intended to illustrate a moral lesson. Nature should not be studied as a goal in itself. In fact, several emblems warn against this kind of scholarly curiosity.³⁴ When Sambucus mentions, for instance,

³⁴ For example 'Sapientia insipiens' (Unwise wisdom [88]), 'Usus libri, non lectio prudentes facit' (The use of a book, not merely reading makes sensible people

the ability of the horned owl ('bubo') to cure epilepsy in children by taking it over, the example is not only intended to be instructive on a medical level, but especially as an illustration of the virtue of altruism.³⁵ This moral function is far less prominent in classical sources like Aristotle and Pliny. In this respect, Sambucus' analysis has to be regarded against the background of the extensive tradition of the (Christian) allegorical interpretation of nature, as exemplified in the *Physiologus*, developed during the second through the fourth century A.D.³⁶

The moral relevance of an example formed the most important selection criterion, followed by its potential to instruct and delight. These conditions were sufficiently accommodating. The interpretation of a natural phenomenon was rarely a rigid practice. In fact, the ambiguous and sometimes enigmatic significance of the examples was an important part of the game. The different features of animals, trees or plants, for example, could each add their own symbolic value. Furthermore, symbolic meanings of related subjects could shift in the course of time from one to another due to a lack of clarity about the precise distinctions.³⁷ One example of this flexibility can be seen in Sambucus' coat of arms, as we have shown before (pp. 6–7). In a traditional, heraldic context the scene of cranes holding a stone, depicted on the insignia, would refer to vigilance. However, in his emblem 'In labore fructus' (Labour brings fruit [173]), Sambucus interprets the birds as symbols of literary activity. The connection is the legendary story of Palamedes' invention of the alphabet after he had seen a flight of cranes in the form of letters. In this case, the epigram provides a lucid explanation of the symbol. In those cases, however, where Sambucus provides little explanation, the variety of possible meanings complicates the source analysis.

[56]) and also 'Curis tabescimus omnes' (We are all consumed by worries [138]), the last of which is analysed in more detail below. See also Buck, "Leben und Werk," pp. 24–25.

³⁵ See Sambucus' emblem 'Sympathia rerum' (The natural affinity of things [201]), lines 8–12.

³⁶ See Buck, "Leben und Werk," pp. 20–21. Buck's general exploration of the principal sources is not illustrated with concrete examples.

³⁷ See the excellent case study of Ulla-Britta Kuechen, "Wechselbeziehungen zwischen allegorischer Naturdeutung und der naturkundlichen Kenntnis von Muschel, Schnecke und Nautilus. Ein Beitrag aus literarischer, naturwissenschaftlicher und kunsthistorischer Sicht," in *Formen und Funktionen der Allegorie. Symposium Wolfenbüttel 1978*, ed. Walter Haug (Germanistische Studien 3) (Stuttgart, 1979), pp. 478–514.

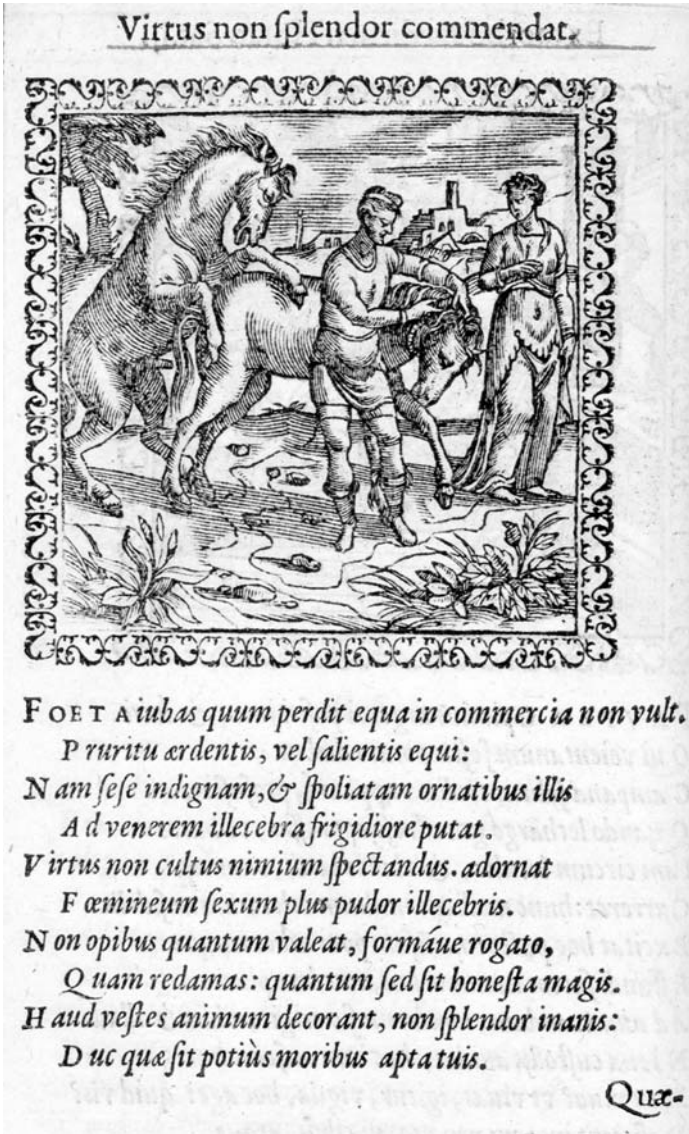


Fig. 24. In 'Virtus non splendor commendat' (Virtue, not brightness makes someone attractive [220]) Sambucus uses horse-breeding as a metaphor for marriage.

In the analysis of the following three emblems we shall take a closer look at the use of sources from natural history. In the first case, entitled ‘Virtus non splendor commendat’ (Virtue, not brightness makes someone attractive [220]) Sambucus recommends moral quality as the decisive factor in choosing a wife. To illustrate this, the emblem employs an example from the area of horse breeding (fig. 24).

When the mane of a mare is shorn, she loses her libido. The mare’s vanity is used to convince the reader that moral qualities, not looks are most important in choosing a wife: “Haud vestes animum decorant, non splendor inanis / Duc quae sit potius moribus apta tuis.” (Clothes do not adorn the mind, nor does pointless splendour; rather marry her, who can match your moral principles). The argument seems somewhat awkwardly constructed: the *mare* pays too much attention to her appearance, while in the analogy the *male* reader should avoid this. It seems implied that the reader should reject the example of the sexually greedy horse (‘ardens equis’). This would fit in perfectly with the use of the horse as a well-known symbol for lasciviousness and the related Platonic metaphor of horses in the context of sexual restraint.³⁸ Still, in this case the horse is not used as a symbol of temperance in particular.³⁹

The source for the biological peculiarity in the emblem can be found in both Aristotle and Pliny.⁴⁰ In Aristotle’s text, the observation is part of a paragraph on the sexual appetite of animals. Pliny discusses the ins and outs of horse breeding more extensively in the context of a broader treatment of land animals. Neither of them places the information in a moral perspective. In the composition of the emblem the classical sources supply the emblematic example, not the moral message. Sambucus makes the connection with marriage. In this way a conventional moral message could be presented in a

³⁸ Plato, *Phaedrus*, 7: 246a–250c; about the Renaissance use of this metaphor, see Bart Westerweel, “The Well-Tempered Lady and the Unruly Horse: Convention and Submerged Metaphor in Renaissance Literature and Art,” in *Convention and Innovation in Literature*, ed. Theo D’haen, Rainer Grübel and Helmut Lethen (Amsterdam-Philadelphia, 1989), pp. 105–122.

³⁹ See Sambucus’ treatment of the chariot allegory in ‘Voluptatis triumphus’ (The triumph of pleasure [148]); see also Valerianus, *Hieroglyphica* [...] book 4, which is entirely devoted to the symbolical uses of the horse.

⁴⁰ Aristotle, *Historia Animalium* 6.18, 572b; Pliny, *Naturalis Historiae* VIII, 66 (par. 164).

fresh way. This example underscores the importance of effective selection. In this case, Sambucus makes a choice from the factual information about the horse. Considering the central theme of the emblem, it is only logical that within this area Sambucus was not interested in, for instance, the intervals of breeding (Pliny), or the comparison to cows' behaviour in this respect (Aristotle).

If the case of the mare presents a mirror of human life, in the second example the significance of nature is still under investigation. 'Noctuae cur Platano abigantur' (Why owls are driven away by the plane-tree [184]) considers the effect of the plane-tree on night-owls (fig. 25).

The first half of the epigram describes how storks protect their young against rapacious night-owls by putting leaves of the plane-tree in their nest.⁴¹ In the remainder Sambucus suggests two possible reasons for this, both derived from the (symbolic) characteristics of the natural subjects. The first option is a natural opposition between the barren plane-tree and night, the time when offspring are conceived. Thus, the argument implicitly assumes, the plane-tree can also ward off the dangers of the night, represented by the night-owl. Sambucus' second explanation is that night can better be spent on something truly useful such as studying, rather than on creating children. In this case the night-owl stands for nocturnal studies as opposed to a life with children, which is intellectually infertile.

The classical sources refer to the use of the leaves by storks, not against the night-owl, but against the bat.⁴² However, these sources do not attempt to explain the phenomenon in a moral light. The exchange of the bat for the night-owl cannot be traced back to a classical source. It is probably caused by their similarity as nocturnal animals, reflected in the proper names of both night-owl (*noctua*) and bat (*vespertilio*). In any case, Valerianus' encyclopedia of hieroglyphs mentions the night-owl instead of the bat.⁴³

⁴¹ The affection of storks for their children (and vice versa) was a popular emblematic theme; see Alciato's 'Gratiam referendam' [30], and furthermore Henkel-Schöne, *Emblemata*, pp. 827–832.

⁴² Dioscorides, *De materia medica* 1.79; Pliny, *Historia naturalis* 24.29 (par. 44); Aelian, *De natura animalium* 1.37; 6.45; later taken up by the *Geoponica* (classical texts on agriculture compiled by Cassianus Bassus in the 10th Century) 1.18.

⁴³ J.P. Valerianus, *Hieroglyphica* [...], book 8, cap. 11. I used the Frellon edition, Lyons, 1610 (p. 76); the story is mentioned under the heading of 'depopulatio' (plundering). Valerianus refers to Aelian, apparently without noticing, however, that it concerns a bat there.



Fig. 25. The book of nature on the values of bookish culture in 'Noctuae cur Platano abigantur' (Why owls are driven away by the plane-tree [184]).

In the third case the classical terminology is applied to a newly discovered animal. The emblem 'Vita irrequieta' (A restless life [113]) presents the bird of Paradise as an example of restless behaviour (fig. 26).⁴⁴ This bird is believed to have no feet and to spend his entire life in the air. The species is referred to in the epigram as the 'apodes' ('the feetless'; Gr. ἄπους, without feet). Even more surprising than the lack of feet is their way of giving birth, which is done inside the womb ('Parturiunt intra ventrem [. . .]'). This bird has only recently been introduced to the European world, and so it is presented as both exotic and new ("India fert"; "avibus [. . .] novis"). This fact and the peculiar characteristics of the bird add to its emblematic appeal.

Sambucus approaches the example with due criticism. Especially the story about the birthing practice is presented with considerable reserve ('si credere fas est, ingens divini muneris istud opus.') Apparently, he is not entirely sure of the reliability of the information. Furthermore, he invites the inspired poets ('vates') to explain the phenomenon.⁴⁵ As a preliminary answer, he interprets the birds as a symbol for the restless soul, represented in the picture by a wanderer.

In classical literature, the *apous* is described as a kind of swallow, with a remarkable ability for long flights.⁴⁶ In all testimonies the birds have feet, albeit small ones.⁴⁷ There is no mention of the internal birthing practice described by Sambucus. According to Pliny it builds a normal nest among the rocks. In Aristotle's account the birds rear their young in long cells made of mud. In the classical texts there is no connection either between the bird and the idea of restlessness.

⁴⁴ See also Wolfgang Harms, "On Natural History and Emblematics in the 16th. Century," in *The Natural Sciences and the Arts: Aspects of Interaction from the Renaissance to the Twentieth Century*, Allan Ellenius (Stockholm, 1985), pp. 67–83, esp. pp. 67–70. See furthermore Sambucus' emblem 'Interdum requiescendum' (One should rest sometimes [118]).

⁴⁵ Both in the Dutch and French translation, 'vates' is rendered as philosopher. See the facsimile edition edited by Voet-Persoons, vol. 1 (Antwerp, 1980–1982), no. 92, p. 36 (Dutch version), and vol. 2, p. 52 (French version).

⁴⁶ Aristotle, *Historia animalium* 9.30.1; Pliny, *Historia naturalis* X, 55 (par. 114) and XI, 107 (par. 257).

⁴⁷ In his contemporary treatment of the bird, the natural historian Conrad Gesner also explicitly states "Apodes dicuntur, non quod sine pedibus sint, sed eorum careant usu [. . .]," Conrad Gesner, *Historiae animalium* (Zurich: C. Froschouerus, 1554), p. 161, cap. b.



Fig. 26. The recently 'discovered' bird of paradise features as a symbol of restlessness in 'Vita irrequieta' (A restless life [113]).

How did the classical *apous* become the bird of Paradise? This is explained by the earliest history of the bird of paradise in Europe. In 1522, the skins of five of these birds were brought home by the expedition of the Portuguese traveler Ferdinand Magellan, who had circumnavigated the world for the first time in history.⁴⁸ The skins had been offered by the king of Batchian at the end of this tour, in December 1521. The New Guinea natives believed the birds never rested on the ground. The bird of paradise was associated with paradise and seen as a divine bird, or as an abode of the souls of the dead. Moreover, the method of preparation of the skins included the cutting off of the feet of the birds. In the first printed report of the journey the birds are called *Mamuco Diata* and described as “a certain most beautiful small bird [that] never rested upon the ground nor upon anything that grew upon it.”⁴⁹

Since its first appearance in Europe, the bird induced scholarly interest. In his ornithological handbook (1599) Ulisse Aldrovandi critically evaluates the debate on the precise characteristics of the bird, referred to as *manucodiata*.⁵⁰ He dismisses, for instance, the idea of the bird’s continuous flight. In an emblematic context the bird is mentioned by Giulio Cesare Capaccio (1592) in his discussion of representing incomplete figures.⁵¹ Capaccio refers to a slightly alternative breeding procedure and does not make the connection with

⁴⁸ F.H.H. Guillemard, *The Life of Ferdinand Magellan and the First Circumnavigation of the Globe* (London, 1890), pp. 285–286.

⁴⁹ The first printed account is a letter by Maximilian of Transylvania, secretary to Emperor Charles V, to his father, Matthäus Lang, cardinal of Salzburg: *De Moluccis insulis* [. . .] (Cologne: E. Cervicornus, 1523). The translation here is taken from the edition of three accounts of the journey, by Antonio Pigafetta, Maximilian of Transylvania, and Gaspard Corrêa respectively, edited by C.E. Nowell, *Magellan’s Voyage Around the World. Three Contemporary Accounts* (Evanston, 1962), p. 303. A facsimile of the Latin text (plus an English translation) of Maximilian’s account can be found in Henry Stevens, *Johann Schöner. Professor of Mathematics at Nuremberg* (London, 1888). Interestingly, in Pigafetta’s manuscript report the bird of paradise hardly flies, and its feet are clearly noticed: ‘Their legs are a palmo in length and as thin as a reed, and they have no wings, but in their stead long feathers of various colors, like large plumes. [. . .] They never fly except when there is wind.’ (ed. Nowell, p. 222).

⁵⁰ Aldrovandi started working on his ornithological history in the middle of the sixteenth century, but the work was not published until 1599. For the bird of Paradise, ‘De manucodiatis’, *Ornithologiae hoc est de avibus historiae libri XII* [. . .] (Bologna: F. de Franciscis, 1599), XII, 21–26, pp. 806–816.

⁵¹ Giulio Cesare Capaccio, *Delle imprese trattato* [. . .] (Naples: H. Silvanus, 1592) I, 21; fols. 67b–68a.

restlessness.⁵² Sambucus, however, could not have gained the same overview in this matter. Still, as early as 1555 the French naturalist Pierre Belon objected against the use of the name *apous* or *apus*, pointing to Aristotle's bird of the same name.⁵³

In sum, Sambucus' construction of the epigram is similar to the previous examples. Instead of using classical sources, however, he starts with a recent discovery, labeled with a classical term. The peculiarity of the bird and its visual appeal made it a perfect subject for an emblematic invention. The bird surprises and stirs the reader's curiosity. In his presentation of the subject, Sambucus tries to be scholarly correct; he expresses his reluctance to believe some details and asks for an explanation of the phenomenon. The moralisation he provided himself by connecting the bird to restlessness, seems to be the main emblematic invention.

*Historical Exempla*⁵⁴

The third category, the extensive field of 'historica fabulosaque', ranges from facts to fiction, including historical anecdotes, tales from mythology and fables like those of Aesop and Phaedrus.⁵⁵ This delimitation may surprise the reader who thinks of history primarily as a reconstruction of the past. However, the early modern interest in history was in the first place directed towards a practical, moral use. A historical example epitomised a general, abstract message in a concrete and therefore helpful way. Concrete actions, like the deeds

⁵² Ibidem, fol. 68a, according to Capaccio the birds breeds its eggs in its back. He furthermore refers to the symbolic representation of scorn for worldly matters.

⁵³ Pierre Belon, *L'Histoire de la Nature des oyseaux* [...] (Paris: G. Cavellat, 1555), book 6, chapter 35, pp. 329–330 (see also book 1, ch. 23, 79). See the reprint edition with commentary by Philippe Glardon (Geneva, 1997). Belon refers to Guillaume Postel as the source for this erroneous use. He furthermore dismisses the idea that the bird never stops flying as "l'opinion du vulgaire."

⁵⁴ This section contains a reduced and revised version of my "The Uses of Ancient History in the Emblems of Joannes Sambucus (1531–1584)," in *Recreating Ancient History. Episodes from the Greek and Roman Past in the Arts and Literatures of the Early Modern Period*, ed. Karl A.E. Enenkel, Jeanine De Landtsheer and Jan L. de Jong (Intersections. Yearbook for Early Modern Studies 1) (Leiden, 2001), pp. 269–285.

⁵⁵ See Scholer's commentary on Sambucus' phrase "historica fabulosaque," "Ein Text hart wie ein Diamant," pp. 110–121.

of the *viri illustres*, the adventures of mythological characters, or even the fairy-tales of animals were suitable for this goal.⁵⁶

The selection and use of historical exempla should thus be interpreted in the same moralising light as that of natural exempla. There are, however, two important differences. In the first place, the narrative composition of historical texts requires a different way of transformation from the informative, pragmatic style of natural history. In view of the limited space offered by the form of the epigram, Sambucus had to select carefully the moments and episodes of the story. Similar to the case of moral philosophy, the sources had to be condensed and rephrased to suit the poetic context. Secondly, the use of anecdotes refers more exclusively to a particular context and often also to a moral interpretation. Compared to the natural allegory, these anecdotes are more easily associated with their original source. Just like the metaphors and sententiae from moral philosophy, the historical anecdote opens the possibility for an intertextual relation between the epigram and the original source. Approaching familiar anecdotes in a new manner was one of the ways to instruct and to delight.

A case in point is ‘Curis tabescimus omnes’ (We are all consumed by worries [138], fig. 27), connecting the story of the death of Pliny the Elder to the theme of melancholy, a well-liked topic in Renaissance Humanism.⁵⁷ The epigram warns against the consuming effects of anxiety. As support for this warning Sambucus gives two exempla. Firstly, he mentions the death of Pliny the Elder, who was killed at the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 A.D. According to Sambucus, Pliny’s death is the result of too much scholarly curiosity. A second historical example, the death of Empedocles, reinforces this message. As the argument goes, Pliny could have learnt from Empedocles,

⁵⁶ Felix Gilbert, “Renaissance interest in history” in *Art, Science, and History in the Renaissance*, ed. C.S. Singleton (Baltimore, 1967), p. 376; see also: R. Landfester, *Historia magistra vitae. Untersuchungen zur humanistischen Geschichtstheorie des 14. bis 16. Jahrhunderts* (Geneva, 1972), p. 358.

⁵⁷ The source for the motto is Ovid, *Tristia* (letters written during his exile in Tomi) 5.1.69: “nolumus assiduis animum tabescere curis” (we do not want to waste our mind with constant worries); the omission of *animus*, ‘mind’ as subject of *tabescere*, ‘to waste away’ in Sambucus’ motto clears the way for the change of mental agony into a more complete, even physical danger.



Fig. 27. Melancholic genius in 'Curis tabescimus omnes' (We are all consumed by worries [138]).

who died by leaping into the crater of Mount Etna.⁵⁸ Here Sambucus explicitly refers to the didactic function of historical exempla.

In his moralisation of both examples Sambucus introduced the theme of melancholy. Melancholy represents both intellectual creativity and pathological self-destruction.⁵⁹ Pliny serves as an example of a melancholic genius, who has to keep the balance between his creative potential and his inclination to worry. The consuming powers of the volcano visualise the self-consuming effects of worrying. The epigram thus also alludes to the theory of the four humours. The cold limbs ('frigida membra') of Empedocles refer to a saturnine, melancholic disposition.⁶⁰ The intellectual capacities of the melancholic genius can suddenly turn into a destructive madness.

This particular interpretation of Pliny's death is an artificial construction made by Sambucus to suit the context of the emblem. The original source of the story, Pliny the Younger's famous letter to Tacitus, provides a different picture. At Tacitus' request Pliny described in detail the course of events concerning his uncle's death during the eruption of Mount Vesuvius. In the end, it was not curiosity, but the heroic concern for the victims of the eruption that caused his death. At first only curious about the phenomenon of the fuming volcano, as his nephew relates, Pliny set out in a galley to investigate the event.⁶¹ When he was asked to help people in danger, his exploration turned into a rescue operation.⁶² At the same time, this

⁵⁸ The description of this episode is derived from Horace's *Ars poetica*. This text was edited by Sambucus and published by Plantin in the same year as his emblems. In Horace, Empedocles is mentioned as a typical enraged poet. In both Horace and Sambucus the antithesis of the *cold* body, signifying here Empedocles' insensitive brain, and the burning volcano he jumped into is emphasised. Horace, *Ars poetica* 453–467; in particular p. 464: '[. . .] deus immortalis haberi / dum cupit Empedocles, ardentem frigidus Aetnam / insiluit [. . .]' (wanting to be considered an immortal god, the cold Empedocles jumped into Mount Etna [. . .]'); Sambucus, p. 138: 'Debuerat mortis Siculi memor esse poetae, / Qui dedit Aetneis frigida membra focus.' (He should have thought of the death of the Sicilian poet, who threw his cold body in the fire of Mount Etna).

⁵⁹ For an anthropological study of the theme of melancholy in a humanist context and its reception, see Harald Tersch, "Melancholie in österreichischen Selbstzeugnissen des Späthumanismus. Ein Beitrag zur historischen Anthropologie," *Mitteilungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 105,1–2 (1997), 130–155.

⁶⁰ See E. Panofsky and F. Saxl, *Divers Melencolia • I Eine Quellen- und Typengeschichtliche Untersuchung* (Leipzig, 1923) and furthermore the discussion of the emblem in the next chapter, pp. 256–258.

⁶¹ Plinius *Epistulae* 6.16.7.

⁶² *Ibidem*, 6.16.9.

did not prevent him from writing down all the particularities of the volcano's activity.⁶³ He died eventually from suffocation; his body was found, completely intact, three days later.⁶⁴

In contrast to Sambucus' interpretation, Pliny's behaviour is characterised by his nephew as brave and cool-headed. In the letter to Tacitus his courage, his lack of fear and panic are stressed.⁶⁵ Of course, it is important to realise that Pliny's description for Tacitus is not necessarily a reliable historical account. The point is not to prove that Sambucus corrupted Pliny's report. On the contrary, both accounts have to be regarded from their own particular rhetorical perspective. For Pliny the Younger, this accident forms an excellent example of the virtue of his uncle, complementing his work as a writer. In his writings, Tacitus is expected to confirm the immortal fame of Pliny's uncle.⁶⁶ Sambucus reduces the story to the initial curiosity of the old natural historian and uses this as an example for his argument about melancholy.

Another, more complex example of the transformation of an historical anecdote in emblems is 'Sola culpa praestanda' (One is only responsible for his guilt [166], fig. 28), specified by the subtitle "About the conviction of the poet Antiphon." This writer of tragedies was said to be sentenced to death after insulting Dionysius, tyrant of Syracuse (430–367 B.C.). The epigram opposes the immortality of virtue to the mortality of man. Why should one be afraid of death, the epigram asserts, if one has a clear conscience? Antiphon also

⁶³ Ibidem, 6.16.10.

⁶⁴ Ibidem, 6.16.19–20.

⁶⁵ In 10 "solutus metu" (free from fear), "fortes fortuna iuvat" (fortune assists the brave) in 11, "utque timorem sua securitate leniret" (so that he alleviated the fear by his calmness) and "cenatque hilaris aut, quod aeque magnum, similis hilari." (and when eating he was cheerful, or, what is equally great, he seemed cheerful) both in 12, and notably: "Et apud illum quidem ratio rationem, apud alios timorem timor vicit." (and indeed in him reason overcame reason, while in others fear prevailed over fear).

⁶⁶ Ibidem, 6.16.2: "Quamvis enim pulcherrimarum clade terrarum, ut populi, ut urbes, memorabili casu quasi semper victurus occiderit, quamvis ipse plurima opera et mansura coniderit, multum tamen perpetuitati eius scriptorum tuorum aeternitas addet." (For notwithstanding he perished, as did whole peoples and cities, in the destruction of a most beautiful region, and by a misfortune memorable enough to promise him a kind of immortality; notwithstanding he has himself composed many and lasting works; yet I am persuaded, the mentioning of him in your immortal writings, will greatly contribute to eternize his name); trans. W.M.L. Hutchinson, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge Mass., 1923).



Fig. 28. 'Sola culpa praestanda' (One is only responsible for his guilt [166]) about the ancient poet Antiphon as an example of the immortality of virtue.

rebukes his friends for their fear of death, a scene that alludes to Plato's famous description of Socrates' death.⁶⁷ Socrates is also mentioned in the epigram as an illustration that moral integrity prevails over death.

The story of Antiphon is reported by Plutarch on two occasions in different moral settings. The treatise *Quomodo adulator ab amico internoscatur* (How to Tell a Flatterer from a Friend) relates the anecdote in some detail. At a convivial gathering Antiphon had been asked to give his opinion on the matter of the best kind of bronze. Antiphon had answered that he considered that bronze best "from which they fashioned the statues of Harmodius and Aristogeiton at Athens."⁶⁸ This reference to the tyrannicides of Athens was a grave insult to Dionysius, who could only see it as a hidden condemnation of his own position. Antiphon serves here as an example of blunt behaviour. Honesty and frankness are important virtues, but they should be combined with tact. As Plutarch puts it: "let us purge away, as it were, and eliminate from our frankness all arrogance, ridicule, scoffing, and scurrility, which are the unwholesome seasoning of free speech."⁶⁹ The behaviour shown by Antiphon obviously lacked tact. It even showed signs of arrogance, ὕβρις, and contempt, σκῶμμα, and is therefore to be rejected.

A different, perhaps even opposite, moral interpretation of the same anecdote is found in Plutarch's work criticising the Stoics, *De stoicorum repugnantibus* (Stoic Self-Contradictions). Discussing the cause of evil in the world, Plutarch observes a contradiction in the thought of the Stoic philosopher Chrysippus (281/277–208/204 B.C.):

Moreover, although he has often written on the theme that there is nothing reprehensible or blameworthy <in the> universe since all things are accomplished in conformity with the best nature, yet again there are places where he does admit instances of reprehensible negligence [. . .].⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Plato, *Phaedo* 117c5–e4.

⁶⁸ Plutarch, *Moralia: Quomodo adulator ab amico internoscatur* 68 A; trans. F.C. Babbitt, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge Mass., 1960); cf. Plutarch, *Moralia: de Stoic. Repugn.* 1051c–d. In the Pseudo-Plutarchean *Vitae decem oratorum* 833b–c and in Philostratus' *Vitae Sophistarum* I.15.iii Antiphon the tragedian is mistaken for the orator Antiphon of Rhamnus.

⁶⁹ Plutarch, *Quomodo adulator* 67e.

⁷⁰ Idem, *Stoicorum repugnantibus* 1051b, trans. H. Cherniss (Cambridge Mass., 1976).

Chrysippus had tried to solve the problem by comparing it to the management of a large household, where sometimes “some husks get lost and a certain quantity of wheat also though affairs as a whole are well managed [. . .].” This argument does not go down well with Plutarch. He denounces the comparison of “husks that get lost [with] the accidents to upright and virtuous men such as were the sentence passed upon Socrates and the burning alive of Pythagoras by the Cyloneans and the torturing to death of Zeno by the tyrant of Demylos and of Antiphon by Dionysius.”⁷¹ The four examples given by Plutarch are meant to shatter Chrysippus’ argument. Antiphon typifies the morally upright man, who is victimised by a capricious tyrant. Since Antiphon is not the most impressive example in the list of famous victims of “heavenly negligence,” men like Socrates and Pythagoras are mentioned first. Still, his presence in this sequence confirms his status as a virtuous man.

Sambucus seems to have been directly influenced by this passage in the *De stoicorum repugnantiis* rather than by the version in *Quomodo adulator ab amico internoscatur*. In the emblem, Antiphon exemplifies an innocent, conscientious man, an independent, fearless poet-prophet who dares to criticise the immorality of tyranny and is sentenced to death for this reason. His fate is also in this aspect compared to that of Socrates: in the end the fame resulting from their actions may serve as a comfort to those who are innocent victims.

Sambucus fits Plutarch’s anecdote into an argument against the transient power of tyranny and in favour of perpetual truth.⁷² He argues that a poet will attain immortal fame for telling the truth. The opposition between the virtuous poet and the unjust tyrant is emphasised here, not the way in which criticism should be presented, which was the main focus of Plutarch’s *Quomodo adulator ab amico internoscatur*. Considering that Antiphon’s criticism of tyranny was the cause of his execution, one may even perceive a political statement in this emblem. Sambucus’ portrayal of Antiphon as a truth-loving hero contains signs of a martyr victimised by censorship. This was as delicate in Europe during the 1560’s as it was at the court of Dionysius. This interpretation raises questions about the intentions behind the selection of particular anecdotes.

⁷¹ Ibidem 1051c–d.

⁷² Sambucus, p. 166: ‘saeva tyrannis’, ‘crudelia iussa tyranni’, ‘vacuus vates’, ‘tantus amor veri.’

Selection of Anecdotes

An important criterion for selecting a story is the potential authority of the exemplum. In the case of natural history the authority is more or less evident from the concrete status of nature. However, the persuasive force of the role models offered by history is less obvious. In order to achieve the aspired effect these exempla have to be adjusted to both the moral theme of the emblem and the intended audience.

Sambucus tends to illustrate virtuous behaviour by anecdotes about respectable historical figures, while vices can also be exemplified by comic characters. A suitable example of this practice is the emblem with the Homeric motto ‘Οὐ χρὴ παννύχιον εὔδειν etc.’ (One should not sleep all night, etc. [29], fig. 29).⁷³ The poem contends that a (military) leader should only sleep lightly, that is, he should always be on his guard. Alexander the Great, for example, secured his vigilance by holding a ball above a bronze vessel, in order to awaken himself when he fell asleep. Sambucus also mentions Julius Caesar of whom similar stories are told.

In the classical sources I have not found any reference to the story of Alexander holding a ball. The same action is, however, told about Aristotle by Diogenes Laertius in his *Life of Aristotle*.⁷⁴ The story is also connected with the traditional topos of the *grus vigilans*, the vigilant crane: a crane watches over the crowd of his fellow cranes, while holding a stone in its feet.⁷⁵ The moment that he might fall asleep, the stone falls, waking the bird.⁷⁶ It seems that in the emblem

⁷³ The scene in the *Iliad* from which the motto is derived, tells the story of Zeus sending a dream to Agamemnon to deceive him. This personified dream addresses the leader of the Greeks in the guise of old Nestor, saying: “εὔδεις, Ἄτρεός υἱέ δαΐφρονος ἵπποδάμοιο; / οὐ χρὴ παννύχιον εὔδειν βουληφόρον ἄνδρα, / ᾧ λαοὶ τ’ ἐπιτεράφονται καὶ τόσσα μέμηλε!” (You’re asleep, O son/Of fiery Atreus, breaker of horses. But to sleep / All night is not good for a man in charge of an army / And laden with so many cares. [. . .]); Homer, *Iliad* 2.23–25, trans. E. Vieu, 2nd edn. (Oxford, 1991).

⁷⁴ Diogenes Laertius, *De clarorum philosophorum vitis* 5.16.

⁷⁵ Apart from classical sources like Aristotle, Plutarch, Aelian and Pliny, the theme appears in Horapollon’s *Hieroglyphica* II, 94 (‘A man guarding himself against the plots of his enemies’; ed. George Boas, 3rd edn. (Princeton, 1993); see von Erffa, “Grus vigilans,” pp. 297–304.

⁷⁶ See also Sambucus’ emblem ‘In labore fructus’ (Labour brings fruit [173]), previously discussed in chapter one, dealing with the coat of arms of the Sambucus family. The *pictura* represents two cranes together holding one stone, while they



Fig. 29. Alexander the Great exemplifies the virtue of *vigilantia* in 'Οὐ χρὴ παννύχιον εὔδειν etc.' (One should not sleep all night, etc. [29]).

the elements of two different stories have been merged and applied to the persona of Alexander.⁷⁷

The reason for this mix of elements is probably the extraordinary appeal of Alexander as a military leader. Alexander serves as a positive role model strengthening the argument for vigilance. In this way the emblem can be seen as an attempt to emulate the *grus vigilans* theme. The substitution of the crane by Alexander provides a more immediately attractive example to the intended reader, who in this case may include the emperor himself.

The counterpart of the positive role model is a negative one. This can be found in the emblem about Timon of Athens, called “Μισάνθρωπος Τίμων” [107]. The epigram relates the anecdote of Timon who avoided social contact with others and consequently denied medical help and died after falling over a pear tree (fig. 30).⁷⁸ In the epigram misanthropy is presented as a disease caused by black bile (melancholy).

The addressee of the emblem, the eccentric Italian humanist Girolamo Cardano, is advised to accept help from his friends when he needs it. Apart from this, Sambucus asks him to publish his treatise on dialectics. In the end Sambucus does not condemn all misanthropes, but distinguishes two sorts: they are either characterised as more god-like than other humans or as utter fools.⁷⁹ Here, as in the case of the Pliny exemplum, the ambiguous nature of melancholy is used to convey a specific moral. Melancholy can be a sign of divine talent and genius, but it can also show its destructive side and madness. Timon’s unnecessary death is used as an illustration of the destructive character of melancholy. The reader should see this as a warning not to follow this example.

clasp a bracelet between their beaks. This emblem plays with the association of vigilance, within the context of leading an industrious and virtuous life.

⁷⁷ The theme of Alexander as the ideal of a vigilant ruler is also expounded by J.P. Valerianus under the heading ‘custodia’ in his *Hieroglyphica* (first published: Basel, 1556), liber 17. Here Valerianus treats the image of the crane holding a stone.

⁷⁸ See *Suidae Lexicon*, ed. A. Adler (Leipzig, 1935), s.v. ἀπορρώγας and Τίμων. See also the epigrams in the *Anthologia Graeca*, 7.313–320, ed. Beckby (Leipzig, [ca. 1965]), pp. 184–189.

⁷⁹ Sambucus, emblem 127: “Quos nulla attingunt prorsus commercia grato / Atque sodalitie subsidiisque carent, / Aut Dii sunt proprii, aut falsus pervertit inanes / Sensus, ut hos stolidos, vanaque corda putes.”



Fig. 30. Timon of Athens represents melancholy resulting in an anti-social attitude in 'Μισάνθρωπος Τίμων' (Timon the misanthrope [107]), dedicated to Cardano.

Positive and negative role models can be combined in the same emblem, as is the case in ‘Importuna adulatio’ (Improper flattery [32], fig. 31). The epigram tells the story of the famous painter Apelles who painted a portrait of Alexander bearing a thunderbolt, an attribute exclusively used for Jupiter. This form of flattery upsets his colleague, the sculptor Lysippus, who consequently protests against such blasphemy and suggests the spear as a more proper attribute.

The comment of the epigram argues that the signs of honour should befit the status of the person concerned. By showing his insight in the order between man and god, Lysippus exemplifies moral integrity. Apelles, however, is characterised as a flatterer, *adulator*, a strongly pejorative term.⁸⁰

Instead of authoritative role models, the author could also select on the basis of the rhetorical force of humour. An example of this type of selection is ‘Ridicula ambitio’ (Ridiculous ambition [54], fig. 32). The epigram relates the story of Hanno the Carthaginian as told by Aelian in his *Varia historia*.⁸¹ Hanno had taught some birds he kept in his house to call his name in praise. In this way he wanted to become famous wherever the birds would fly. But as soon as the birds were freed, they took up their old song again. In the picture we see Hanno portrayed as an old man, waving at the birds as they are flying out of his house. In the epigram the vanity of ambition is stressed. Sambucus urges the reader not to try to achieve fame by vain activities, because only virtue will last.

The comic effect of the story is anticipated in the adjective ‘ridiculous’ in the motto. This humorous aspect of the emblem is not free from moral implications. Although the reader can hardly accept any historical authority from Hanno as a role model, he is forced to laugh at the behaviour. The effect is the same as that of a negative role model.

⁸⁰ Flattery was vigorously condemned by Sambucus in ‘Cedendum, sed non adulandum’ (By withdrawing, not by flattering [165]), where he compares the flatterer to the pest: ‘Pestis adulator, morsque inimica siet’ (the flatterer is a pest and deserves a hostile death).

⁸¹ Aelian, *Varia historia*, 14.30; Aelian each time presents his anecdotes in a moral light. In this case, he starts with a moral statement, indicating the ethical category in which this story is placed: “Hanno the Carthaginian in his arrogance was not prepared to accept the limitations of humanity [. . .],” trans. N.G. Wilson, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge Mass., 1997), see for the epigram pp. 142–143.



Fig. 31. In 'Importuna adulatio' (Improper flattery [32]) the legendary classical painter Apelles serves as a negative role model.

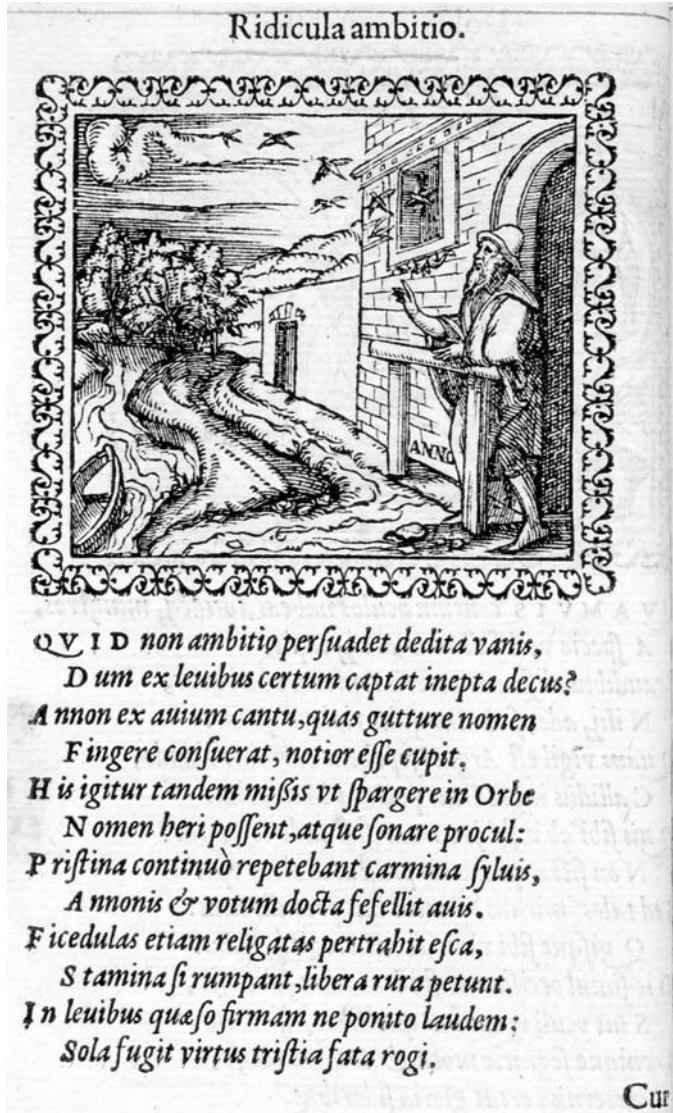


Fig. 32. Aelian's story about a certain Hanno of Carthage serves as an example of a foolish combination of vanity and ambition in 'Ridicula ambitio' (Ridiculous ambition [54]).

The selection of exempla gives us interesting information about the type of audience the author intended to reach. One should distinguish two kinds. The primary audience is specified in dedications occurring in more than one third of the emblems. Sometimes the person mentioned beneath the motto is also addressed in the epigram, as in the case of the Timon emblem for Cardano. Consequently in these emblems the personal message is felt more strongly, than in the emblems where this is not the case, like the Pliny emblem. The publication of the emblem book presupposes at the same time a wider audience.

Evidently this Pliny emblem playfully teaches a moral lesson to the scholarly oriented reader. The figure of Pliny the Elder, the writer of the widely used encyclopaedia *Naturalis historia*, could exert some historical authority on humanists. It is not surprising therefore to find that Johann Hartung (1505–1576), the addressee, was a member of this scholarly circle.⁸² This professor of Greek at Freiburg university and his colleagues there—the *et ceteros* in the motto may well refer to Hartung's milieu—are likely to appreciate the subtlety of the argument. Although the exemplum presents to the addressees a negative role model, it is a very attractive one. The melancholic genius of Pliny leaves the reader space for a positive means of identification. The warning against too much intellectual activity thus presupposes an acknowledgement of Hartung's scholarly capacities.

Antiphon represents the ethical conscience of a man of letters. Again the intended readership is constituted by the humanists of the Republic of Letters. The focus here is on the political attitude of a morally responsible individual. Personal responsibility is held more important than a stable political life. Keeping in mind the delicate dependence on patronage of most humanists, this morally correct attitude may easily be challenged by a more pragmatic behaviour.

The position of most members of the humanist community required a constant balancing of political dependence on the one hand and the expression of their intellectual and artistic thoughts on the other. Especially during the turbulent times of the religious conflicts in the second half of the sixteenth century, the margins within which humanists could express political opinions were narrow, as they were often

⁸² Jöcher, *Allgemeines Gelehrten-Lexicon*, s.v. mentions that Hartung also fought against the Turks in Hungary, which would certainly have been appreciated by Sambucus.

employed by parties actively engaged in these conflicts.⁸³ Accentuating the primacy of virtue over death, Antiphon was meant as a comforting example of the relativity of their dependence.

By way of conclusion, it is almost gratuitous to say that Sambucus used the classics of Greek and Latin literature as a copious source of imagery, expressions, facts, and anecdotes. The form in which the classics were used varied considerably, ranging from explicit quotations from authoritative texts to more subtle implicit allusions to relatively little-known authors. His often ingenious way of selecting and transforming classical texts is an important guide in interpreting the emblem. Moreover, the effect of the intertextual echoes determined to a large extent the attraction of the emblematic game. As such, however, the poetic device is not exclusively emblematic, but typical of the humanist taste and literary practice.

In emblems on nature, the classics are primarily used as a practical source of information. For the invention of emblematic subjects, the encyclopaedic works of Aristotle, Pliny and Aelian served as an attractive starting point. However, the moral message cannot be traced back to these classical sources. This part of the emblematic composition has to be compared to the extensive (Christian) tradition of the allegorical interpretation of nature.

In the category ‘*historica fabulosaque*’ Sambucus selected fragments from history and fictional literature to present role models for proper conduct. Sambucus’ instrumental use of these sources sometimes leads to a considerable adaptation of the original source. This is not only caused by the didactic purpose of the emblem. It is also part of the humanist game of imitating and emulating the originals. Sambucus’ emblems do not merely teach moral lessons, but are also instruments in confirming friendship, expressing admiration and communicating erudition.

⁸³ An illuminating example in this respect is Justus Lipsius. For an analysis of the tension between his pragmatic political attitude and his autobiography, see Enenkel, “Humanismus, Primat des Privaten,” pp. 13–42.

CHAPTER SEVEN

WORD AND IMAGE IN *PICTURA* AND EPIGRAM

When Sambucus completed his preface, in January 1564, he had not yet seen the final result of the woodcutters' activity.¹ His introduction was written before the epigrams were typeset and printed beneath their corresponding woodcuts. Thus, the emblems he introduced in the preface, were the emblems he had in mind: an ideal mixture of what he appreciated in his models, of what he knew to have written himself, and of the first artistic results he had probably seen in the preceding months. Consequently, his perspective on his own emblems differed considerably from that of the readers who bought the book eight months later. The production process shows a gap between the maker's fragmented view on the emblem, and the readers' sense of unity in the genre.

This can hardly explain why Sambucus alludes to the double nature of the emblem only superficially in his preface. Especially to the modern reader, for whom the emblem is a historical genre, the silence on word-image relations comes as a surprise. Of course, he refers to the ideal effect of the visual and the verbal elements: "let the emblems strike the eye with their signs, and exercise the mind of the hearer."² This statement, however, reveals little about Sambucus' view on the interaction between the two. On closer inspection the sentence only states that the emblem should communicate by means of two media: the visual and the verbal.³ Sambucus does not explain his view on the connection, or interaction of the visual and verbal components in more detail.

¹ Rooses, "De Plantijnsche uitgaven," p. 7. The first woodcutter started working on the *picturae* on 17 November 1563. The work would continue to August, 1564.

² "[. . .] haec in oculos notis quibusdam incurrant animumque auditoris agunto [. . .]" Sambucus, *Emblemata*, fol. A2ro. See chapter three, p. 98.

³ The communication is described in two rather intensive verbs: 'incurrere' and 'agere'. The suggestion that a *pictura* can communicate quickly and powerfully ('strike the eye') does not imply that Sambucus considered the activity of the epigram ('exercise the mind') to be of less importance.

Today this aspect is still one of the most intriguing problems in emblem studies. Modern students of the genre agree that images are an essential constituent of the emblem. Generally the term 'image' in this context can refer to a visual element, such as the *pictura*, and the use of literary imagery. The function of the emblematic illustration, however, has remained a subject of debate. As a contribution to exploring the relations between word and image in emblems, I shall here address a specific aspect of this field in Sambucus' collection, namely the interaction between epigram and *pictura*. I have chosen to reserve the term 'image' for a visual representation in a particular *pictura* (unless explicitly indicated otherwise). This will keep the investigation focused on the distinctively emblematic setting. The iconographic tradition of the separate *picturae* in Sambucus' emblems, which obviously deserves a systematic study, falls largely beyond the scope of this chapter. First, however, I shall try to situate the analysis in its theoretical context, by briefly considering the different angles from which the topic has been approached in modern scholarship.

Models and Contexts

During the 1960s and 1970s, predominantly German emblem scholars put a great effort into constructing a satisfactory theory of emblems, especially regarding the relation between word and image.⁴ In the subsequent decades this debate has determined to a large extent the research in the field. These important contributions therefore deserve critical attention.

Most influential was the theory put forth by Albrecht Schöne in his *Emblematik und Drama im Zeitalter des Barock* (1964). Schöne develops a definition of the ideal emblem, focusing on the basic characteristics of a central corpus of emblem books. He described the emblematic process in terms of representation and interpretation, based on visual (or, indeed, visualisable) images.⁵ The essence of the emblem lies in the use of a picture with a special ontological status:

⁴ Peter Daly offered an evaluation of this debate in English with his *Emblem Theory. Recent German Contributions to the Characterization of the Emblem Genre* (Wolfenbütteler Forschungen 9) (Nendeln, 1979).

⁵ Albrecht Schöne, *Emblematik und Drama im Zeitalter des Barock*, 3rd edn. (Munich, 1993), pp. 21–28.

die emblematische *pictura* [besitzt] einen wesentlich veränderten Realitätsgrad: sie und erst sie repräsentiert ganz unmittelbar, nämlich auf anschauliche Weise, was durch die emblematische *subscriptio* dann ausgelegt wird [. . .] Jedes Emblem ist insofern ein Beitrag zur Erhellung, Deutung und Auslegung der Wirklichkeit. (26)

In other words, the connection between image and its significance is not arbitrary, but deeply rooted in a metaphysical reality. Schöne thus connects the use of emblems to a symbol theory, in which natural signs are interpreted as forms of divine revelation. The picture represents the sign most directly, and therefore constitutes the core of the emblem.

This view on emblems has important drawbacks, both on a methodological and on a practical level.⁶ In the first place, Schöne's theory is a-historical. It is clear that his ideal type of emblem cannot accommodate the diversity of the genre. The theory invites the scholar to judge and denounce emblems according to a definition formed centuries after the books were made. Schöne is aware of this, but he rejects the criticism that his definition is restrictive.⁷ In his view an *Idealtypus* is meant to define a central range ('Kernbereich'), on the basis of which variants can be discerned.

This is only a difference in nuance, however. Variants obviously do not have the same status as 'proper' emblems. Schöne's definition leads to a selective view on the genre, evidenced, for example, in Homann's studies or Henkel and Schöne's *Emblemata. Handbuch zur Sinnbildkunst*.⁸ Although the merits of this monumental handbook are beyond doubt, this should not prevent us from seeing its restrictions. Since it is nowadays often used as a reliable canon of emblem literature, it is important to realise that the editors in fact made a disputable selection of emblems on the basis of Schöne's normative

⁶ For criticism on Schöne, see Dieter Sulzer, *Traktate zur Emblematis. Studien zu einer Geschichte der Emblemtheorien*, ed. Gerhard Sauder, ed. (St. Ingbert, 1992), pp. 32–40, Wolfgang Neuber, "Locus, Lemma, Motto. Entwurf zu einer mnemonischen Emblematisierungstheorie," in *Ars Memorativa. Zur kulturgeschichtlichen Bedeutung der Gedächtniskunst 1400–1750*, ed. Jörg Jochen Berns, Wolfgang Neuber (Tübingen, 1993), pp. 351–372, in particular pp. 352–355.

⁷ Schöne, *Emblematis und Drama*, p. 30, pp. 266–269.

⁸ About Homann, see my discussion of his approach to Sambucus' emblems in particular, pp. 86–88. Henkel, Schöne (eds.), *Emblemata. Handbuch zur Sinnbildkunst des XVI. und XVII. Jahrhunderts*, 3rd edn. (Stuttgart-Weimar, 1996). The selection criteria are indicated in the introduction, p. xxi.

emblem theory. In the case of Sambucus, for example, out of his 223 emblems the editors chose to reproduce only 186 in full, while in eleven cases the emblems are merely listed, without a reproduction of the picture or the epigram. The remaining twenty-six are not considered as real emblems. These restrictions apply to all emblem books included in the handbook and, *a fortiori*, to the many emblem books not considered worthy of inclusion at all.

A second objection to Schöne's theory involves the confusing concept of the "ideelle Priorität des Bildes" (the ideal priority of the picture). This notion obscures the interaction between concrete picture and epigram. Schöne's idea of the priority of the picture implies the primacy of a *conceptual* picture, rather than a concrete representation of a visual object.⁹ The picture, in this view, constitutes the idea behind the emblem. At this point, however, the distinction between word and image becomes blurred. When 'image' can also refer to literary images, it complicates the analysis of the interaction between epigram and *pictura*. The problem in Schöne's theory is triggered by his dominant focus on symbol theory.

The interpretation of emblems as revelatory symbols is influenced by the renewed interest in Neoplatonic philosophy and symbol theory. Seminal in this area of research is the contribution of the eminent art historian E.H. Gombrich. In his article "Icones symbolicae" he situates the Renaissance use of symbolic images in art in a broader intellectual context.¹⁰ By doing so he wanted to defend the use of these images against the disapproval in which it was generally held since "the onset of the Age of Reason" (123).

Gombrich's explorations of the mystic use of symbols in (Neo-)Platonism and the didactic approach to the symbol in Artistotelianism show a heavier stress on the importance of the former. He signals with assent that the Platonists were aware of the inadequacy of discursive speech in contrast to the "direct apprehension of truth" and the "ineffable" intensity of the mystic vision. The Aristotelians, in his view, have overrated "the powers of language" by taking "the

⁹ Schöne, *Emblematik und Drama*, pp. 26–28.

¹⁰ E.H. Gombrich, "Icones Symbolicae. Philosophies of Symbolism and their Bearing on Art", in *Symbolic Images. Studies in the Art of the Renaissance*, ed. E.H. Gombrich (London, 1972), pp. 123–195. (A first version of this article was published in the *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 11 (1948), 163–188.)

categories of language for the categories of life" (190). Still worse, they underestimated the creative powers of language:

I have argued here in connection with the theory of the emblem that the Aristotelian conception of metaphor which only sees the 'transfer' of existing categories across a pre-existent network of concepts obscures the central importance of this resource which allows the speaker to re-structure reality in a passing image or a more permanent coinage. (191)

This conclusion about emblems is, however, not entirely convincing. Gombrich arrived at this statement through the theory of *imprese*.¹¹ In the first place, the emblem differs in important respects from the *impresa*.¹² Moreover, parallel to the criticism on Schöne's emblem theory, a more fundamental objection concerns the relation between theory and practice. As Gombrich himself admits, "the philosophical arguments used in the learned introductions to these fashionable volumes were little more than rationalizations of a pleasure that had its roots elsewhere" (160). In order to test Gombrich's conclusion, the *imprese* and emblems themselves should be studied, and compared to the assumptions of theoretical tracts. The roots Gombrich traces are in many respects still the theoretical arguments of a specific, philosophical current.

On the whole, the diversity within the genre should make us wary of generalising theories. Neoplatonic symbol theory may help us understand some of the philosophical symbols of Achille Bocchi or the use of emblematic images in religious poetry, but do not apply in the case of, for example, Alciato or Sambucus.¹³

¹¹ Gombrich, "Icones Symbolicae," pp. 160–165.

¹² See chapter three, pp. 89–94 for the significance of the term 'emblem'; for more on the differences between emblem and *impresa* see Laurens, "Introduction," 8–13, esp. n. 4; for the sixteenth-century *impresa* see Caldwell, *Studies*.

¹³ For Bocchi's emblems as Neoplatonic symbols, see Denis L. Drysdall, "Authorities for Symbolism in the Sixteenth Century" in *Aspects of Renaissance and Baroque Symbol Theory 1500–1700*, ed. Peter M. Daly, John Manning (New York, 1999), pp. 111–124. Anne Rolet, however, assigns to the *pictura* "un rôle didactique fondamental, en explicitant ou en traduisant la *symbolon* implicite qui articule le texte [. . .];" (*Les Symbolicae quaestiones d'Achille Bocchi*, p. 1406). For the relevance of Neoplatonic symbol theory for religious poetry see the example of George Herbert and the discussion of the ontological status of metaphors in his work by Bart Westerweel, *Patterns and Patterning. A Study of Four Poems by George Herbert* (Amsterdam, 1984), pp. 28–35. About Alciato's use of symbols and hieroglyphes, see Balavoine, "Les Emblèmes d'Alciat," (58): "Sa lecture d'Horapollon est aristotélécienne et non neo-platonicienne. [. . .] Le projet d'Alciat n'est pas de déchiffrer les secrets du monde, ni d'ériger la vision en connaissance supérieure."

Emblematic images do not always pretend to reveal a deeper reality. Yet, with this idea both Schöne and Gombrich (and many others) connect the use of symbolic images and the rise of the emblem to another fascinating literary phenomenon of the same period: the hieroglyph.¹⁴ This concerns the vogue of reading Egyptian hieroglyphs as Platonic symbols. Already Plotinus considered the symbolic interpretation of hieroglyphs as the proper approach of deciphering the Egyptian script, following in this respect earlier accounts by Plutarch, Clement of Alexandria and Diodorus Siculus.¹⁵ Hieroglyphs became a fashion in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries thanks to the dissemination of Horapollo's *Hieroglyphica* and Francesco Colonna's allegorical dream tale *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili*. Horapollo's guide to reading hieroglyphs probably dates from the fifth century AD¹⁶ Although it also contains some correct decipherings, it is largely a mixture of Egyptian paraphernalia and Greek philosophy. Only with the discovery of the Rosetta stone in 1799 would all these early attempts turn out to have been erroneous. Meanwhile, Horapollo's treatise on hieroglyphs became so popular that the book was reprinted in various languages at least thirty times before the end of the sixteenth century.¹⁷ As a "manual not only for the interpretation of symbols but for their creation" (in the words of Anthony Grafton) it has always been closely associated with the rise of emblem books in the same period.¹⁸

More recently, however, scholars have downplayed the influence of hieroglyphics on emblems.¹⁹ Although emblems evidently make use of hieroglyphic signs, they differ in important respects. Most

¹⁴ Seminal studies in this respect are Karl Giehlow, "Die Hieroglyphenkunde des Humanismus in der Allegorie der Renaissance, besonders der Ehrenpforte Kaisers Maximilian I," *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses* 32 (1915), 1–232 and Ludwig Volkmann, *Bilderschriften der Renaissance. Hieroglyphik und Emblematis in ihren Beziehungen und Fortwirkungen* (Leipzig, 1923), about Sambucus, in particular pp. 46–47.

¹⁵ See Boas' introduction to his edition of Horapollo (Princeton, 1993), pp. 8–10.

¹⁶ Ibidem, Foreword by Anthony Grafton, pp. viii–xxi.

¹⁷ D.C. Allen, *Mysteriously Meant. The Rediscovery of Pagan Symbolism and Allegorical Interpretation in the Renaissance* (Baltimore-London, 1970), p. 112.

¹⁸ Horapollo (1993), p. xvii (by Grafton), pp. 20–27 (by Boas).

¹⁹ Russell, "Emblems and Hieroglyphics: Some Observations on the Beginnings and the Nature of Emblematic Forms," *Emblematica* 1 (1986), 227–243; Saunders, *The Sixteenth-Century French Emblem Book*, pp. 71–81; and also Russell, *Emblematic Structures*, pp. 113–124.

importantly, the emblem is accompanied by text while the hieroglyph is supposed to be the text itself. In its Neoplatonic interpretation, the hieroglyph conveyed its philosophical truth ideographically. The reader is not helped by an explanatory epigram, as is the case in the emblem. Furthermore, the use of hieroglyphic motifs in emblems is not a sign of a systematic attempt at deciphering the codes of a metaphysical reality. Frequently conventional hieroglyphs receive a new interpretation, differing from Horapollo's explanation.²⁰ The frequent use of the term (hieroglyph, hieroglyphic) in the second half of the sixteenth century does not necessarily refer to the specific Egyptian script. It is often simply synonymous with 'sign' or 'symbol'.²¹ When Sambucus in his preface compares the emblem to hieroglyphs, he emphasises the enigmatic character of the symbols, rather than their ontological, revelatory status, which is in line with the rhetorical strategies of the text discussed in chapter two:

Quare selecta et ὀγκώδη erunt nec minus quam caecae et singulares Aegyptiorum et Pythagoreorum illae notae mentem exercent [. . .]

(Therefore, the subjects have to be well chosen, pregnant with meaning, and may exercise the mind no less than those obscure and extraordinary symbols of the Egyptians and the Pythagoreans.)²²

Sambucus' remark concerns the construction of emblems and the selection of symbols. Although it certainly situates the emblem in the same area of enigmatic symbols, it does not imply a specifically Neoplatonic symbol theory.

Russell even points at an influence in a reverse direction. The inclusion of pictures, he argues, in the first illustrated edition of the *Hieroglyphica*, published by the Paris printer Jacques Kerver in 1543, seems to have been inspired by the success of Alciato's emblems. From this perspective hieroglyphs, or at least the editions of hieroglyphic texts, were modelled after emblem books and not vice versa.²³ In short, the popularity of hieroglyphs, or even their appearance in emblems, should not be regarded as evidence for the priority of the *pictura* in emblems, or its dependence on a specific symbol theory.

²⁰ For some examples of this practice, see Saunders, *The Sixteenth-Century French Emblem Book*, pp. 77–80.

²¹ Russell, "Emblems and Hieroglyphics," p. 227.

²² Sambucus, *Emblemata* fol. A2vo.

²³ Russell, *Emblematic Structures*, pp. 116–117.

The early modern interest in hieroglyphs reflects a Neoplatonic symbol theory, but it does not provide a new insight in the emblematic relation between word and image.

A more general intellectual context for a symbolic interpretation of emblems is that of medieval symbolism.²⁴ The allegorical tradition in the literature from this period, visible for instance in the many books on natural history (like herbals and bestiaries), is an important source for emblematic motifs. Furthermore, the medieval tradition of biblical exegesis can be regarded as an important influence on the common types of argument developed in emblems. According to this tradition, texts had both a literal and a spiritual meaning (*sensus litteralis* and *sensus spiritualis*). The latter layer of significance could be divided into three modes of interpretation: an allegorical, a tropological (providing moral guidance) and an anagogical one (concerned with the final destiny of humans). Building on this tradition emblematic imagery can thus communicate existential knowledge on different levels at the same time. In contrast to the revelatory Neoplatonic theory, this context accommodates an Aristotelian, didactic function of the symbol. In the preface Sambucus in fact refers to a didactic function of the illustration: "Let a banal picture suggest a hidden sense, let an obscure image teach a clear message—if only image and intention are in agreement with each other."²⁵ The image serves as a didactic instrument rather than being an icon leading to a higher level of reality.

More recently a new theoretical model has been suggested. Daniel Russell proposes to see the use of emblematic images in the light of a transition from medieval realism to the subjective use of imagery of Romanticism. If medieval symbolism assuming a set relation between sign and meaning, still obtained there would have been no need for an explanatory text. In fact, Russell made it the central thesis of his monograph: "The emblem appears, then, as a transitional form between the reign of the natural sign, and the coming

²⁴ For the relation between medieval symbolism and the genre of the emblem, see Schöne, pp. 45–50; Dietrich Walter Jöns, *Das "Sinnen-Bild" Studien zur allegorischen Bildlichkeit bei Andreas Gryphius* (Stuttgart, 1966), pp. 27–44; Porteman, *Inleiding*, pp. 25–28. About the allegorical tradition in general, see A.J.S. Fletcher, *Allegory. The Theory of a Symbolic Mode* (Ithaca, 1964) and Rosemond Tuve, *Allegorical Imagery. Some Medieval Books and Their Posterity* (Princeton, 1966).

²⁵ Translation by Wesseling, "Testing modern emblem theory," p. 14.

dominance of the arbitrariness of language.”²⁶ This suggestion presupposes, however, a unity within the corpus of emblem books that is often hard to find. In its broad scope, it does not provide concrete starting points for approaching the specific relation between epigram and *pictura* in individual emblem collections.

Having seen the restrictions of a symbolical interpretation of emblems for the genre as a whole, the question remains whether it applies to particular emblem collections, such as that of Sambucus. The first step towards differentiation, albeit within the framework of a normative theory, was made by Dietrich Walter Jöns. He distinguished between early emblems and the later production. In his view the emblems of Alciato and his early followers (including Sambucus) form a separate category of emblems. In contrast to the later symbolical emblems, in these early examples the images are selected as illustrations to a message. In these cases there is no necessary relationship between image and reality. There is no deeper connection between image and meaning: the emblem is “aliquid excogitatum.” It is the author who creates the link between the image and its meaning.²⁷

Schöne and Daly criticised his view by pointing to the consistent tradition of specific interpretations of emblematic exempla: the emblem writers did not invent their own interpretation but based their emblems on traditional sources.²⁸ This criticism, however, seems hardly convincing. In the previous chapter we have seen how the interpretation of and allusion to classical sources constitutes an essential part of the emblematic game. Analysed in more a strategic way, the authority of the source text could be employed as a rhetorical ploy. The use of literary sources is no evidence for (the belief in) a necessary link between symbol and reality, but part of the literary practice of intertextuality. If such a link existed, how could one explain those cases where different meanings are attached to the same image? Even in sixteenth-century practice it was acknowledged that a certain picture could give rise to different interpretations.²⁹ It seems

²⁶ Russell, *Emblematic Structures*, p. 242; see also pp. 41–56.

²⁷ Jöns, *Das Sinnen-Bild*, pp. 18–28.

²⁸ For Schöne’s criticism to this view, see *Emblematik und Drama*, pp. 40–42, and Daly, *Emblem Theory*, pp. 47–51 (letter by Schöne) and 52–53 (Daly’s own, more moderate position).

²⁹ According to Gillis in the Dutch preface to Sambucus’ emblems, one *pictura* can

inevitable to conclude that at least in these cases the relationship between image and epigram is created by rhetorical invention or by imitating an alternative literary tradition.³⁰

The link between emblem and reality is simply not always a relevant focus. It may clarify the intellectual contexts in which the emblems were composed, but it seldom helps us understand the relationship between word and image in the actual emblems. For this, a systematic categorisation is needed. This is more or less what a third German emblem theorist, Dieter Sulzer, suggested to do. His hermeneutics concentrated on the notions of interaction ('Korrelation') and synthesis (or rather, a process of synthesising: 'Synthetisierung').³¹ He acknowledges that this approach will not lead to uniform results, but to a model of emblematic categories.³² The pragmatism ends, however, when he continues by exploring the methods for a normative assessment. According to Sulzer the principal criterion for judging emblems should be the degree of synthesis reached in specific categories of emblems. Each type of emblem has its own balance between word and image. Sulzer sees classification and the criterion of synthesis as instruments to assess the success of a particular emblem.³³

I do not, however, think that this normative approach is a necessary step. The concept of synthesis does not need to be a normative parameter in order to be useful as an instrument of analysis. The relation between epigram and *pictura* can be analysed from two perspectives, that of the construction or that of the reception of emblems. An analysis of the construction attempts to reconstruct the production process and the intentions behind it. It deals with the question of whether the picture is a form of interpretation of the

"easily be interpreted in two or three different ways" by using a different motto; see *Emblemata*. In *Nederlandsche tale ghetrouwelick overgheset* (Antwerpen: C. Plantin, 1566), fol. A4ro. See also the facsimile reproduction by Voet and Persoons, *De Emblemata van Joannes Sambucus*, vol. 1, p. 19; see also chapter three, p. 103.

³⁰ See the concrete examples mentioned by Neuber, "Locus, Lemma, Motto," pp. 352–355. According to Drysdall Sambucus is an exponent of those emblem writers who combine both Neo-Platonic and Aristotelian symbol theory, "Authorities for Symbolism," p. 119.

³¹ Dieter Sulzer (Gerhard Sauder, ed.), *Traktate zur Emblemantik. Studien zu einer Geschichte der Emblemtheorien* (St. Ingbert, 1992), in particular pp. 50–62.

³² *Ibidem*, pp. 60–61.

³³ *Ibidem*, p. 61.

epigrams or vice versa. The answer to such a question will provide a hermeneutical tool for word-image research. This perspective has been criticised for its dependence on the notion of authorial intention, but without, to my view, persuasive arguments.³⁴ Although strictly speaking the author's intentions, in the sense of his personal considerations, can never be retrieved in full, it is still possible to attempt a reconstruction of the ideas and strategies behind the composition. From this point of view, the author's intention in composing the emblem can provide useful information about its functionality.

When the emblems are approached from the perspective of the reader, aspects like the production process or the authorial intentions are less important in measuring the degree of emblematic synthesis. However, this approach will inevitably be hampered by difficulties in retrieving suitable sources of reception. Examples of reader's response, apart from the theoretising debates (which are, strictly speaking, another matter) are hard to find.

In the subsequent sections of this chapter, I shall analyse the epigram-*pictura* relationship from the perspective of the construction of the emblems. The focus will be on the ways in which the producers of emblems created a relationship between epigram and *pictura*. This will be done by looking both at the visual clues presented in the epigrams and the iconographic representation of the ideas expressed in the textual parts of the emblems.

The Production: Priority of the Epigram

Before the emblems were printed, word and image were separate entities, produced by different people: a writer, an artist (designer, executor) and a printer. One of these had to start the process. In some contemporary French emblem books (such as Corrozet's *Hecatomgraphie* and Aneau's *Picta poesis*) the woodcuts predate the text.³⁵

³⁴ Ibidem.

³⁵ See Alison Saunders, "Visual versus Verbal: Changing Uses of Imagery in Sixteenth-Century Verse," *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester*, 81,3 (1999), pp. 283–284; the genesis of Aneau's emblems is described by the author himself in the preface, *Picta poesis. Ut pictura poesis erit* (Lyons: M. Bonhomme, 1552), fols. A3ro.–vo.

The emblems of Alciato, Bocchi, Sambucus and Junius, however, all originate essentially from the writer's desk.³⁶ Most of the *picturae* were produced after the epigrams had been written.³⁷ The designs for the illustrations were made by artists who were in most cases paid by the publisher. From this fact alone, one can see that a form of unity between the verbal and visual components could only be secured through the collaboration of at least three different contributors.

Traces of team work, or, at least, communication between writer and designer are scarce. In the case of Junius' emblems, for instance, the commentary gives instructions for the visual representation. According to Junius this was his way of instructing the designer of the epigrams. The distance prevented him from doing so personally ("quia locis disiungimur").³⁸ This is, however, a strange argument for including a description of pictures in the printed work. Informing the designer could easily have been done without publishing the information in the commentary. Moreover, the 'instruction' for the pictures includes details about colours, which were evidently of no use to the illustrator. It seems that Junius was less concerned with the actual woodcut illustration than with the range of possibilities for representing the concepts he dealt with in his epigrams.

In Sambucus' case there is a more complex, but similar relationship between the writer and the illustrator. As was indicated before, the designs for the pictures were commissioned by both Sambucus and Plantin. Initially, it was the author who took the initiative for the illustrations. Sambucus made an arrangement with Lucas d'Heere

³⁶ For the discussion about the genesis of Alciato's emblems see Miedema, "The term 'emblema'" and Scholz, "The 1531 Augsburg edition." Regarding Bocchi: the collaboration between Bocchi and the illustrator Bonasone was based on the already composed epigrams; see Rolet, *Les Symbolicae Quaestiones d'Achille Bocchi*, pp. 566–570, pp. 712–715, and her "Achille Bocchi's *Symbolicarum quaestionum libri quinque*," in Enenkel and Visser, *Mundus Emblematicus*, pp. 106–109. Regarding Sambucus and Junius, see also the assessment of Plantin's involvement in chapter two, pp. 62–69. About Junius' emblems see Chris L. Heesakkers, "Hadriani Iunii Medici Emblemata (1565)," in Enenkel-Visser, *Mundus Emblematicus*.

³⁷ This is not invariably the case. Junius, for instance, reuses a *pictura* from Sambucus' emblem 'In labore fructus' (Labour brings fruit [173], previously discussed in chapter one, pp. 6–7), featuring Sambucus' coat of arms, in his emblem xxi 'Eruditionis decor concordia, merces gloria' (Harmony is the beauty of learning, honour its reward).

³⁸ H. Junius, *Emblemata* [...] (Antwerp: C. Plantin, 1565) fol. A3ro. See Heesakkers, "Hadriani Iunii medici Emblemata (1565)," p. 44.

for the designs drawn on woodblock.³⁹ d'Heere lived and worked in Gent at the time. Sambucus' stay in the same city in this period makes it probable that there was some form of contact between d'Heere and the author, as Werner Waterschoot has argued.⁴⁰ If this is the case, d'Heere's designs may have been personally supervised by Sambucus. This would provide a useful framework for interpreting the intended relations of the epigrams to the illustrations.

There are two problems, however. In the first place, we cannot prove the collaboration between Sambucus and d'Heere. Although Waterschoot argued convincingly that the two must have been in contact, the nature of this contact remains unclear.⁴¹ In the second place, it is not clear whether all the illustrations used in the emblems are made after designs by d'Heere. At least half of the initial designs were redrawn by Pieter Huys and Geoffroy Ballain.⁴² This happened by order of Plantin for unknown reasons.⁴³ The relation of these new designs to those by d'Heere is not clear. Therefore, at least fifty per cent of the illustrations in the first edition cannot be regarded as the result of a close collaboration between author and illustrator. Moreover, in the second edition of the *Emblemata* an additional fifty-five emblems were included. The *picturae* for these emblems were made by Peter van der Borch, as far as we know, without any instructions on Sambucus' part.

Thus, the production of the emblems shows that there was not necessarily a close contact between the author and the (eventual)

³⁹ Apparently Plantin did not reckon with designs made on woodblocks, because at the same time he ordered some woodblocks and borders from Gillis Hevele; see Max Rooses, "De plantijnsche uitgaven," pp. 5-6.

⁴⁰ Waterschoot, "Lucas d'Heere und Johannes Sambucus," pp. 45-52.

⁴¹ Waterschoot gives circumstantial evidence for the 'collaboration' between Sambucus and d'Heere. He explores mutual interests and relations (48-50), and traces the influence of the emblems in d'Heere's work (pp. 50-52). He does not analyse the relation between epigrams and *picturae* in detail.

⁴² d'Heere made 168 designs; Plantin had eighty of those redrawn; Rooses, "De plantijnsche uitgaven," p. 8.

⁴³ Voet-Persoons, "De Emblemata van Joannes Sambucus," vol. 1, pp. 10-11 and Waterschoot suggest the redrawing was done for technical (and not aesthetic) reasons. If this is true, these technical reasons have to concern d'Heere's professional skills (Voet-Persoons posit that d'Heere could have been inexperienced in writing or drawing mirrorwise, which seems improbable given d'Heere experience as an artist.) If it was only a matter of, for example, damaged woodblocks, Plantin could have returned the blocks. Instead, he asked other artists.

illustrator. In those cases where Sambucus could not guide the design of the illustrations, the artist had to resort to the epigram. Therefore, against Schöne's 'ideelle Priorität' of the *pictura*, I would rather suggest the opposite in the case of Sambucus' emblems.⁴⁴ The epigram is here prior to the *pictura*, both in the invention of the emblems, and in its communicative function, as a closer examination of the epigrams will show.⁴⁵

Speaking pictures? Visual Elements in the Epigrams

How, then, did Sambucus accommodate the *pictura* in his own epigrams? A systematic enquiry renders a wide range of possible relations. Some epigrams describe precisely a particular scene, while others seem to lack any reference to a visual representation. In charting the epigrams for visual clues three categories have been distinguished. A detailed classification of all emblems is provided in appendix three (pp. 273–276).

Remarkably, the largest group consists of those epigrams that do not seem to exploit or anticipate the presence of a *pictura* in any particular way. This category contains no less than 173 out of 223 emblems, making up more than 77 per cent of the total collection.⁴⁶ The epigrams concerned can be fully understood without the accompanying *pictura*, and do not refer to its presence. The poems may use concrete examples and can even to a certain extent contain descriptive elements. However, these features are not distinctive of the emblem alone, since many non-emblematic epigrams contain descriptive elements and exempla as well.

⁴⁴ Anne Rolet has done this for Bocchi's symbols. See Rolet, *Les Symbolicae quaestiones d'Achille Bocchi*, vol. 2, pp. 712–713. See furthermore John Manning, *The Emblem*, pp. 80–109.

⁴⁵ Waterschoot, "Lucas d'Heere und Johannes Sambucus," p. 55.

⁴⁶ See the appendix for the list of emblems concerned. This is in contrast to Homann's claim, *Studien*, p. 69: "die meisten seiner Texte (130) beginnen mit einem Hinweis auf die vorangehende *pictura* [. . .]" It is not clear to me which 130 cases Homann includes in this category. Waterschoot's reconstruction of the composition of the *Emblemata* proceeds on Homann's observation: "Angesichts der Wechselbeziehung zwischen *pictura* und *subscriptio* im Emblem ist ein deutlicher Zusammenhang, ja eine Symbiose zwischen diesen zwei Elementen von wesentlicher Bedeutung. [. . .] Also scheint es mir unwahrscheinlich, daß Sambucus rein zufällig in Gent landete [. . .]", "Lucas d'Heere und Johannes Sambucus," p. 48.

Three emblems in which exempla function in different ways provide a representative view of this category. The first example concerns those epigrams that are highly discursive, focusing exclusively on the moral lesson. ‘Sera parsimonia’ (Frugality that comes too late [87]) may serve as an example. As we saw earlier (pp. 179–182), the text draws on Seneca’s first letter to Lucilius, focusing on the concrete interpretation of frugality, rather than on Seneca’s thoughts about the precious nature of time.⁴⁷ However practical from a philosophical perspective, the argument is solely concerned with the moralising message and does not even use an illustrative example:

Semper eris pauper, reditus si sumptibus aequus
 Et larga dones munera cuique manu.
 Enumera census, subduc ratione, supersit
 An multum, lapso et mense quid addideris.
 Tempore provideas, vacua ne sede morere:
 Marsupio restet quantula summa vide,
 Ne senium, morbi, duris et rebus egestas
 Quando urgent, ludat fundus inanis herum.
 Nec tamen insideas partis, non crastina verses
 Sollicite: fructus sit mediocris opum.

(You will always be poor if you equal income with expenses, and offer with lavish hand gifts to anyone. Make up the balance, calculate what remains from the sum, whether there is much, and whether you added anything in the past month. Watch out in time, before you linger in an empty house: Look how much there is left in your purse, lest its empty bottom will mock the owner, when old age, diseases and death in hard times are pressing. But also do not sit on your possessions, do not ponder anxiously over what will be tomorrow: let the satisfaction of your property be modest.)

Sambucus here teaches a straightforward lesson that does not refer to a visual representation. It can easily be understood without the *pictura* showing a man in rich clothes sitting next to a table handing money to two other men in simpler outfits. The picture by itself would, however, not provide enough specific clues to understand the message.

The second example is taken from a sub-group of epigrams employing scenes from daily life and anecdotes. Although frequently graphic, the narrative or anecdotal exemplum does only rarely lead to concrete

⁴⁷ See fig. 21.



Fig. 33. The *pictura* of 'Æquitas' (Justice [161]) should represent the sharp-eyed Lynceus.

visual connections. 'Aequitas' (Justice [161], fig. 33) is a case in point of this kind of epigram:

Principis officium scire est iurisque periti,
 Quid iubeant leges conveniatque simul.
 Lynceus est oculus iuris, sed prominet alter
 Turbidus, ut rigidum temperet arbitriis.
 Non nimis attentum Respublica nonve remissum
 Exigit. In medio ius veniaequae placent.
 Tum gladius recte prudens dominabitur orbi,
 Cuius ab ancipiti vita cruore datur.

(It is the task of a ruler and of those who are skilled in law to know what the laws prescribe, as well as what is becoming. The eye of the law is sharp as that of Lynceus, but the other, dazed eye is prominent, so that it can modify the strict one with respect to sentences. The republic does not call for someone too watchful or too soft: justice lies in the middle, and forgiveness finds favour. Then the wise sword will rule rightly over the world, by whose severe bloodshed life is given.)

In this case the epigram describes the properties of a fair judge by referring to the proverbially sharp sight of the mythical hero Lynceus. The emblematic example deals with sight, but the epigram itself makes no attempt to visualise the story. There is no direct link to the *pictura*, nor does the epigram attempt to visualise in a more general way. There is no symbol, description, or a comparable literary figure creating a similar effect. This is simply a moralising epigram, employing a legendary example to underpin the message.⁴⁸

The picture in this category often functions as an illustration of the example. Those elements of the example that can easily be depicted are selected for representation. In the emblem about justice, the picture shows a king with one large eye on his throne. The draughtsman's visual translation of the "lynceus oculus" (the eye of the kind of Lynceus) aptly works for the viewer who knows how to

⁴⁸ Similar examples are 'Pietatis vis' (The strength of dutifulness [23]), where the epigram argues that loyalty to family is more important than riches. This is illustrated by the example of the Spartan king Lycurgus. Secondly, in 'Quae prosunt non temeranda' (Do not violate what is useful [14]) the epigram explains why pigs are used for sacrifices while cows are not. Thirdly, the epigram of 'Consuetudo prava' (Bad habit [110]) opposes the habits of cutting bread with a knife, and cracking nuts open with the teeth. In all of these emblems there is a concrete example, that may appeal to the reader's imagination. A visual effect, however, is not stimulated in a specific way.

‘read’ it. Of course, as will be analysed in more detail in the next section, there are several means by which the *pictura* can guide the interpretation, like the use of attributes. In this emblem, for instance, the *pictura* depicts a sword encircled by a snake, indicating the combination of a prudent and firm administration of justice, whereas the book points to the laws of which the fair judge ought to have knowledge. In this way the meaning of the epigram is reflected in the *pictura*. However, this illustrative device does not depend on a distinctive characteristic of the epigram.

The third example in this category concerns epigrams dealing with a visible object, but without a concrete link to a visual representation. This is the case in ‘Partium τῆς οἰκουμένης symbola’ (Symbols of the parts of the world [96]) dedicated to Hubertus Goltzius:

Est regio quaevis climate certo
 Aëre distincta et commoditate.
 Quaelibet haud quidvis terra feretque:
 Africa monstrosa est semper habendo,
 Antea quod nemo viderat usquam.
 Fert Asia immanes frigidior
 Nempe solo apros et nimbigera ursos,
 Sed reliquas vincit viribus omnes
 Belua, quam Europae temperat aër.
 Taurus ut est fortis, bufalus una.
 Ergo sit Europae taurus alumnus,
 Africae at index sit tecta Chimaera.
 Sint Asiae immites ursus aperque.

(Each region has a certain climate, and a distinct advantage through its atmosphere. Not every region can bear anything you please. Africa is always to be regarded as an extraordinary continent, because nobody has ever seen it before. Storm-bringing Asia with its rather cold soil indeed brings huge wild boars and bears. But all the others are beaten in force by the beast that Europe’s air controls. It is strong like a bull and a buffalo together. Therefore let the native bull be the sign of Europe, but the secretive chimaera that of Africa. Let the merciless bear and wild boar be the mark of Asia.)

The epigram proposes visible tokens for each of the continents, but this alone is not enough to warrant a form of interaction between epigram and *pictura*. Within the current category this epigram comes nearest to a dominance of a visual element. Still, the presence of the picture is not explicitly presupposed, nor necessary for understanding the emblem. As in the previous examples the *pictura* is related to the epigram purely as a visual illustration.

The second, considerably smaller category consists of epigrams showing more effort to accommodate a *pictura*. This is the case in twenty-nine emblems (13 per cent of the total collection). The poet here varies the narrative point of view to achieve a more theatrical effect. He employs figures like apostrophe, in which case objects, animals or abstract entities are addressed, and *prosopopeia*, in which case one of these categories addresses the reader. Deictic elements, like the Latin ‘en’ (look), serve the same purpose.⁴⁹ By these means the poet introduces the lively presence of something other than himself. Although these figures are not exclusively reserved to an emblematic context, they can still be considered as effective instruments in this kind of epigram.⁵⁰ The case of ‘Superfluum inutile’ (The superfluous is unnecessary [19]) presents a suitable example (fig. 34).

The epigram opens by calling attention to the visual aspects of the example: “Porrigit en quantam bos lassus pondere linguam / Elinguis nulla est sed crocodile tibi.” (Look: what a big tongue the cow stretches out, tired by the weight, while you, crocodile, have not got a tongue at all). A few lines later in the same epigram a goose is addressed emphatically (“anser care”; dear goose). Here we see again that the epigram does not necessarily refer to a concrete picture. In this case, the designer depicted the crocodile and the cow, but not the goose. The visualising elements in the epigram are in the first place literary instruments to create a vivid effect.

Prosopopeia is used in ‘Canis queritur nimium nocere’ (A dog complains that excess harms [157], fig. 35):

Non ego furaces nec apros insector et ursos,
Applaudit nec hero blandula cauda dolo,

⁴⁹ Examples of the deictic use of ‘en’ are ‘Superfluum inutile’, ‘Imperatores virtutes’, and ‘Antiquitatis studium’ (The study of antiquity [164]). Apart from this use, ‘en’ can also call attention to something that is not visible; this is the case in the epigrams of ‘Malum interdum simili arcendum’ (Evil sometimes has to be kept off by evil [17]): ‘frigus en calorem gignit [. . .]’; ‘Dii coepta secundant’ (The gods prosper undertakings [115]): ‘In Superis quisquis solitus spem ponere curae / Audeat, en coeptis protinus astra favent.’ and ‘Sola culpa praestanda’ (One is only responsible for his guilt [166]): ‘Socratis en quantum se mors diffudit in aevum / Solamenque mali noxia nulla gravans.’

⁵⁰ In his preface to the Dutch translation, Gillis mentioned the apostrophe and *prosopopeia*, together with the rhetorical figures of ‘problema’, dialogue and apodixis; *Emblemata*. In *Nederlandsche tale*, fol. A4vo; reprint edition Voet-Persoons, vol. 1, 20. For a discussion of Gillis’ preface see Porteman, “The Earliest Reception,” pp. 36–40.



Fig. 34. Although addressed in the epigram, there is no goose to be seen in the *pictura* of 'Superfluum inutile' (The superfluous is unnecessary [19]).



Fig. 35. A boy whipping a dog and a woman caressing a puppy accompany the dog's textual complaint in 'Canis queritur nimium nocere' (A dog complains that excess harms [157]).

Sub iuga sed mittor validus, traho et esseda collo,
 Quaeque levant alios, viribus usque premor.
 Per vicos ductum me alii latratibus urgent,
 Miratur casus libera turba meos.
 Quam fueram charus dominae, si parvulus essem,
 Non mensa, lecto nec caruisse velim.
 Sic multis vires et opes nocuere superbae,
 Contentum modico et profuit esse statu.

(I do not pursue thievish wild boars or bears, nor does my flattering tail applaud the master by way of trick, but being strong I am yoked and with the neck I pull a cart. I am constantly oppressed by forces that are liberating to others. When I am led through the neighbourhood other dogs press me by their barking, the free lot wonders at my misfortune. How dear was I to my mistress if I would be a little dog; I then would not want to miss table or bed. In this way proud strength and possessions have been harmful to many and being contented with a modest situation has done good.)

The story told by the dog in the present tense reduces the narrative distance. The visual effect is strengthened by the descriptive details (it is pulling a cart, and while being led through the neighbourhood other dogs are barking). Still, the epigram cannot be said to establish a form of interaction with its *pictura* and could also be understood without it. What is more, the relationship between the dog and the theme of excess is difficult to transform into a picture. In this case, the designer represented a man whipping a dog that pulls a cart on the left, while on the right a woman caresses a puppy.

The last category consists of those epigrams containing explicit references. These epigrams come closest to showing a direct relationship to a picture. Only twenty of the 223 emblems can be classified into this category (9 per cent of the total collection). Sambucus here presents his emblematic examples by using demonstrative pronouns. Yet, even these words do not automatically refer to the accompanying *pictura*. An example of this is the emblem ‘*Felicitas indigna, vel superflua*’ (Undeserved, or superfluous happiness [136], fig. 36).

In lines three and four the activity of the silk-worm is described: “*Non alitur foliis, nec fotu, sed sine cura / tam leve quod cernis pendulus urget opus.*” (It is not fed by leaves, nor stimulated by warm medications, but pendulous it squeezes the work you see, smoothly and without any concern.) Actually, the exact activity of a silk-worm squeezing out a thread is not represented in the *pictura*. What we see is a conventional representation of a conversing couple. Again,



Fig. 36. "Pendulous it squeezes the work you see," according to the epigram, but in fact the silk-worm is too small to be represented in 'Felicitas indigna, vel superflua' (Undeserved, or superfluous happiness [136]).

in spite of a demonstrative the woodcut is not an indispensable tool for understanding the message of the epigram.

Some of the epigrams within this category, however, are dependent on a *pictura*. Especially the emblems referring to representations of ‘insignia’ offer cases in point. In each of these examples the word ‘symbolum’ (here: sign, symbol) provides the referential clue.⁵¹ See, for instance, the epigram in ‘In secundis consistere laudabile quoque’ (It is also admirable to stand in the second place [50]):

Orpheus lyra valebat,
 Olor sacreque semper
 Fuit, suave cantans.
 Post hunc bonusque Homerus,
 Philomela cui dicata est,
 Tanquam loco secundo.
 Sed rectius secundum
 Illi locum dedissent:
 Nam ut psittacus meretur
 Primas, loquax secundas
 Pica, iste vincit illum.
 Hoc symbolum referri
 Ad eos potest, gradum qui
 Laudemque non tenere
 Primam queunt, sed inde
 Virtute mox sequentem.

(Orpheus was powerful through his lyre; the sweet singing swan was always sacred. Homer, to whom the nightingale is dedicated, follows after him, what might be called in the second place. But it would have been more justified if they had given Orpheus the second place. For just as the parrot deserves the first place and the garrulous magpie the second, the latter [Homer] defeats the former [Orpheus]. This symbol can refer to those who cannot hold the first place, but then quickly follow by their virtue.)

The ‘symbol’ referred to in the last lines, here denotes both the *res picta*, the visual representation and the signifier, the argument in the epigram. Without the picture the reference ‘this symbol’ would be confusing. However, the *pictura* in itself is not an autonomous ‘symbolum’. This can be tested by isolating the *pictura* from the textual parts in the emblem (fig. 37).

⁵¹ See the range of meanings indicated by René Hoven, *Lexique de la prose latine de la Renaissance* (Leiden, 1994), s.v.: “A) preuve, gage, symbole [. . .] B) enseigne (d’une maison, d’une auberge) [. . .] C) dans *symbolum uocale*: une maxime [. . .].” See also Drysdall’s “Budé on ‘symbolè, symbolon’ (Text and Translation).”



Fig. 37. What does this symbol refer to? Without reading the epigram, it seems difficult to establish the message of the 'symbolum' referred to in the epigram 'In secundis consistere laudabile quoque' (It is also admirable to stand in the second place [50]).

What does the *pictura* actually show? We see two men, against a background of four different birds on shields. The attributes of the two men (the man on the left holds a lyre, the man on the right is reading a book) give some idea of their identity, but do not really help the reader out. Of the birds the swan, the parrot and the magpie can be recognised easily. The bird in the lower left is a more difficult matter: a nightingale is harder to distinguish from other small birds.⁵² The symbolic value of these images can be reconstructed at least partially with common knowledge of the iconography in this period. Thus, taken together, these objects hint at a message about music or literature, probably poetry. The nightingale is renowned for its singing, the swan is a symbol of poetry, and the lyre stands for lyric expressions. The reader on the right also points in the direction of literature. Furthermore, the difference in hierarchy between the magpie and the parrot may give a clue. Observations like these would roughly determine the viewer's interpretation when confronted with this *pictura* in isolation of its *subscriptio*. The image can only speak fragmentarily and hardly ever provides a coherent argument.

Therefore, the reference to a visual representation should be considered as a connection between word and image. The word symbol is used to build a bridge between the visual and the verbal elements of the emblem. The term symbol does not denote a picture, but it attributes significance to visual objects. These objects may be represented in a real picture, but can also be described in an epigram. A strict reference to a particular *pictura* can only be established when it is certain that author and artist collaborated closely. Even in such a case the epigram can still be regarded as the most important evocation of a (mental) picture. Basically the *pictura* remains an *illustration* of the image; it is not the image itself.

In short, in Sambucus' epigrams the reader will find different degrees of visualisation. The majority of epigrams, however, provides no specific visual clues; only a few poems are dependent on an accompanying visual representation. Even in the latter case it is seldom possible to connect the visual clues in the epigrams to the particular *pictura*. Between these extremes another group can be seen to create a vivid, visual effect by means of literary figures. This effect is, however, often difficult to represent in a picture.

⁵² For nightingales depicted in other emblems see, Bocchi, symbol 88 and Junius, emblem lvi.

Mute Poetry? Narrative Elements in the Picturae

After looking for visual clues into the epigrams, let us now investigate how the pictures are integrated into the emblems. When we begin with the idea that the designer made the *picturae* after the epigrams were written, the design comes down to transforming words and ideas into images. This does not imply that the illustrations are pictorial copies of the epigrams. The illustrator had to interpret, select and transform by different means.

In analysing the pictures different categories can distinguished analogous to the previous section. The following questions will each time serve as a guiding line: What part of the epigram does the designer choose to represent? How did he represent abstract moral concepts and ideas? Does the designer add new elements? Finally, does the *pictura* provide the viewer with significant clues for the central meaning, or, in other words, could the (intelligent) viewer understand the tenor of the emblem without reading the epigram?

Again the topic is approached from the perspective of the construction. The coherence of emblems is not to be considered as an a priori assumption, but should be tested against the background of its different producers. An evident example for this is the occurrence of errors made by the artist. In 'Principum negligentia' (Carelessness of princes [187], fig. 38), the epigram of which was treated earlier, Sambucus describes how the blind Cyclops Polyphemus has to support himself with a stick, while his sheep follow his wandering ways ("Trunco vestigia firmat, / Errat balantum grex sequiturque ducem"). In the *pictura*, however, the artist has depicted a resting figure leaning against a tree, a misunderstanding probably caused by the use of the word 'truncus'. It is interesting to see that Gillis apparently based his Dutch version on the *pictura* rather than on the text by Sambucus, writing that Polyphemus "rested on a tree." Grévin, however, followed the text more closely, by indicating that Polyphemus was not resting, but on the move ("il marche inconstamment"). Probably Grévin could not even have been distracted by the *pictura*, since he had almost certainly finished his translation before the Latin edition was published.⁵³

⁵³ Voet and Persoons, *De Emblemata van Joannes Sambucus*, vol. 1, p. 13 (about the date by which Grévin had finished his translations) and no. 158 for the translated versions of Gillis and Grévin.

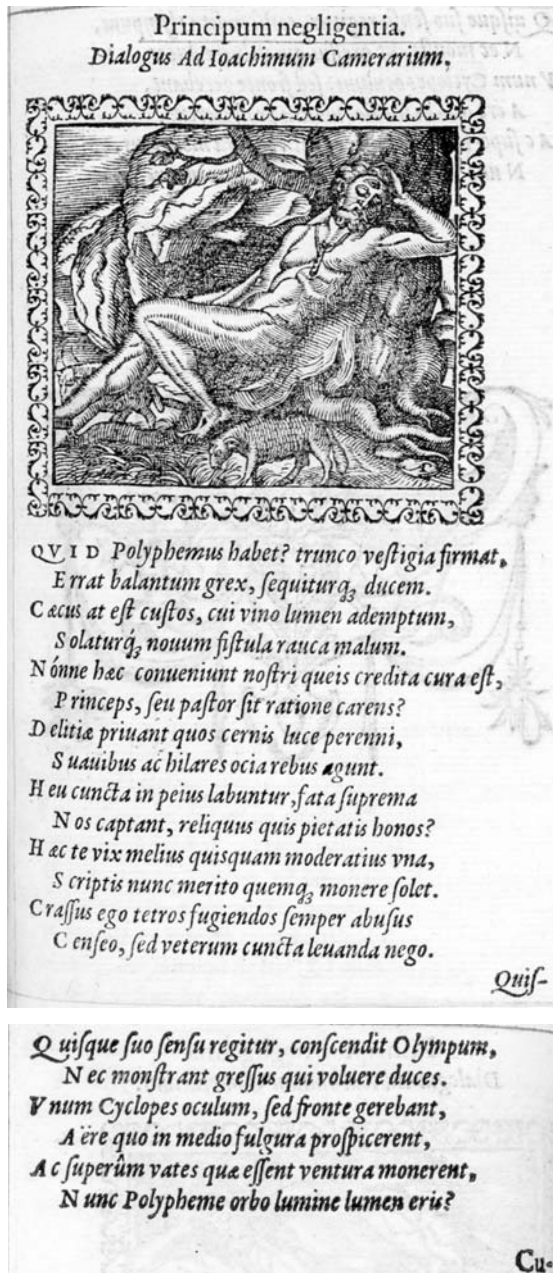


Fig. 38. Polyphemus resting on a trunk in the *pictura* of 'Principum negligentia' (Carelessness of princes [187]) while the epigram describes him as a wandering shepherd.

For another kind of artistic confusion the *pictura* of ‘Studium et labor vincit’ (Zeal and hard work prevail [147], fig. 39) is a case in point. In the epigram Sambucus exemplifies the need for enthusiasm and industry by a vessel with two handles:

Est vas quod capitur, rite iuvans auriculis suis;
 Ansam sed cupiunt solliciti prendere dexteram
 Fortes atque alacres quos remouent nulla pericula.
 Laevam sed pueri, desidiosi, ingenio ac pigri
 Prensant atque senes qui fugiunt saepe molestias.

(This is a vessel that is taken hold of, fittingly offering help with its handles; but those anxious to eagerly grasp the right handle are strong and fierce, not scared off by any danger, whereas the immature, the lazy, the slow-minded and elderly men who often flee discomfort, clutch at the left handle.)

This description is not followed in the *pictura*, where the left and the right are confused. Clearly, the people holding the left handle are the energetic persons described in the first lines, while the figures on the right are the weak and lazy. Perhaps the designer mistakenly forgot to take into account that woodcuts are always printed in reverse. In any case, this woodcut is clearly not the picture imagined by Sambucus when he wrote the epigram.

It may seem inappropriate to point at technical mistakes in an argument about the general patterns of relations between epigram and picture. Nevertheless, it shows that there is an important difference between a conceptual picture on the one hand, conceived and sometimes described by the author in an epigram, and the illustration of this picture by an artist on the other. This difference clearly affects the relation between word and picture. Mistakes like this one point at the distance between the image invented by the poet and the *pictura* produced by the artist. The result will clearly not have been what the author had in mind. The reader is confronted with an internally contradictory emblem.⁵⁴ Thus, mistakes in the illustrations

⁵⁴ In ‘Voluptatis triumphus’ (The triumph of pleasure [148]) the description of left and right of the horses and carriage is given from the driver’s perspective. Other errors: in ‘Insignia valent’ (Insignia are important [242]) the art of making gems is confused for a silver- or goldsmith; in ‘Privatum lucrum damnun publicum’ (Private gain is public loss [139]) the picture is modelled after the epigram ‘Publica privatis potiora’ as printed in the 1564 edition. In the new version, however, the example of King Codrus is left out, thereby making the male figure in the picture superfluous. Henkel and Schöne (p. 1074) simply do not mention this prominent figure in their iconographic lemma.



Fig. 39. The *pictura* of 'Studium et labor vincit' (Zeal and hard work prevail [147]) could cause some confusion to the readers in distinguishing right from left.

are clear indications for debunking the idea of synthesis in Sambucus' emblems and the symbolic power of the *pictura*.

But this does not rule out the occurrence of other emblems with a tighter relationship between word and image, generated for instance by epigrams with visual references. The most direct link from picture to epigram is found in those cases dealing with symbols or personifications. Here the epigrams are centred on visual representation. The picture can show in detail what is described in the epigram. This can be seen for instance in the picture of 'Grammaticae Dialecticae Rhetoricae Historiae differentia' (The difference between Grammar, Dialectics, Rhetoric, and History [121], fig. 40).

Here, the woodcut shows three personifications with various attributes using a fourth female figure for a pedestal. Mythical animals and a background of three niches corresponding to the standing figures complete the picture.

The epigram amply describes the differences in appearance of History, Rhetoric and Dialectics (clearly introduced in line 1: "Sunt tres praestantes diversa veste Puellae"). In the *pictura* History, represented by the middle figure, is unpretentious ('simplex'), a light ('lux') and a guardian of time ('custos temporis'); Rhetoric, the figure represented on the right, wears a *syma*, the long robe worn by actors in ancient tragedies; Dialectic is dressed in a coarse dress. In the *pictura* she is depicted on the left. In the epigram Grammar comes at the end and marks something of a turn. Her important position is described in just a few words. Her fundamental status rather than her appearance is the focus of attention. The personification of Grammar is thus visualised as the pedestal carrying the other statues. The mythical animals are mentioned in the last two lines of the epigram as an additional symbol for the respective disciplines. In this way, Sambucus pre-determined the design of the picture. The artist only had to carry out the implicit prescriptions of the epigram.

The iconographical attributes of the three personifications, like the torch and hourglass in the hand of the naked figure of History, help the viewer to recognise part of the message without first reading the epigram. These conventional attributes are probably more accommodative to the draughtsman's purposes than the dresses. The size of the woodcut hardly allows for the details of a *syma*. Furthermore, the inconspicuous position of Grammar contrasts with its fundamental importance as explained in the epigram. Grammar's pose leaves little space for depicting clear attributes, which makes the figure less



Fig. 40. In the *pictura* of 'Grammaticae Dialecticae Rhetoricae Historiae differentia' (The difference between Grammar, Dialectics, Rhetoric, and History [121]) there seems hardly enough space available to do justice to the fundamental position of grammar.

easily identifiable. Thus, from the four disciplines mentioned in the motto only three are immediately visible, which may have had a somewhat puzzling effect. Perhaps the viewer would discover the basic quality of grammar only after reading the epigram.

Less precise than the descriptions of the previous example are those emblems in which a concrete example is meant to confirm a general moral message. In these cases the epigram still determines to a large extent the design of the picture, but the representation is not of vital importance for understanding the emblem. For example, the epigram in 'Fortuna duce' (Guided by Fortune [22]) opens by pointing towards two visible objects in the first two lines of the epigram: "Sunt binae hic cistae, quarum tenet altera plumbum / Auro sed gravis est altera, neutra patet." (There are two chests here, one containing lead, the other heavy with gold. Neither of these is open).

Clearly, the *pictura* (fig. 41) could not have done without the two chests, once they have been introduced like this. It is harder, though, for the illustrator to depict the point of the example: as long as both chests are closed, the difference in contents between the two is invisible. Whereas the epigram can thus easily use the example to illustrate the unpredictable nature of fortune, the picture has few options to convey this message. A man is shown lifting one of the chests, but without reading the epigram this still does not help the viewer to understand what is going on. Nor do the young man and lady provide a significant indication, apart from the suggestion that they have just ordered someone to transport the chest on the left. Even the reader who combines the picture with the motto, 'Guided by Fortune', printed just above it, can hardly be expected to discover the essence of the emblem. The young lady portrayed in the middle does not show any of the attributes of Fortuna, for example, which would perhaps have provided a helpful clue. It remains problematic to catch the narrative of the example in a static image. The illustrator's opportunities for conveying a narrative are limited to the bounds of visual representation.

As was shown earlier, the vast majority of the epigrams lack explicit references to pictures. In these cases the designer has more creative freedom to transform the message of the epigram into a picture. Provided that there is an appropriate link with the contents of the epigram he can select the scenes he prefers to depict. Naturally, the



Fig. 41. Although the *pictura* of 'Fortuna duce' (Guided by Fortune [22]) represents the emblematic example, it cannot represent the central point of the argument about the difference between the two chests.

most important criterion for the selection of scenes is their visual potential. In epigrams where abstract concepts are exemplified by concrete objects, evidently the latter will be represented.

The narrative power of these illustrations is dependent on the familiarity of the subject. Famous examples from the realm of classical mythology, or personifications with clearly recognisable attributes are often easily identified. The combination of motto and picture can then form an intriguing puzzle to the reader. But in many cases Sambucus' invention aims to surprise the reader by elaborating on an unconventional example. In these emblems, the picture is often no more than an illustration of the argument of the epigram, showing by visual means what is told in the textual parts of the emblem. On its own, or just in combination with the motto, the emblematic message of this kind of *pictura* is incomprehensible.

For instance, in 'Consuetudo prava' (Bad habit [110]) Sambucus writes about bad habits in daily human life. The examples he mentions are cracking nuts with one's teeth, in contrast to cutting soft bread with a knife. Sambucus devotes the final lines to the consequences of bad habits. He compares it to the intrusion of venom in the human body ('Noxia paulatim repunt, nec protinus omne / Funditur in laeso corpore virus atrox.' Injurious things crawl slowly, similarly black venom does not spread immediately through an injured body). The selection of an example for visual representation is not difficult to make. Although the snake recurs frequently in the pictures of Sambucus' emblems, in this case it would have been difficult to portray the venom operating in an injured body. Naturally the artist represented the first of the two examples in the picture (fig. 42).

This does not mean that the illustration is easy to understand without reading the epigram. Even when the motto 'Consuetudo prava' (Bad habit) is taken into account the picture is hardly comprehensible: In the centre a man is dining at the table (using cutlery), while to the left a smaller figure seated on the floor is also eating (without cutlery). What is the bad habit shown here? At first sight the man at the table attracts most attention. But what does he do wrong? Is eating a bad habit? Only after reading the epigram the viewer will understand that *both* men are examples of silly habits. In fact, cutting bread does not seem a bad habit in itself. The action only becomes illogical when compared to cracking nuts with one's teeth.



Fig. 42. What are these men eating in 'Consuetudo prava' (Bad habit [110])?

To communicate the meaning of the pictures more directly, the artist can resort to several solutions. The simplest way of avoiding misunderstanding on the part of the viewer is the use of verbal explanations in the *pictura*. This is the case in the *pictura* of 'Consilium' (Counsel [30]), in which a banner is depicted on which the word 'concilium' (Deliberation) is written. Similarly, the emblem 'Poetica' (Poetry [46]), in which the personification of poetry unfolds some of her creative principles, shows a picture in which is written 'Chaos' in Greek letters. Apparently, the designer found this concept impossible to represent by purely visual means.

Similarly, the *pictura* of 'Persei fabula' (The story of Perseus [127]) shows the word 'Hiperborei', referring to the place where Perseus killed Medusa (fig. 43). In the epigram Sambucus connects her petrifying powers to the way of living of the other inhabitants of the region, the Hyperboreans. The merry Hyperboreans symbolise a festive, but irresponsible lifestyle. When one engages in such a way of life, one's intellectual capacities will be arrested. In the end Perseus' deeds exemplify for Sambucus a life of studious industriousness.

For the viewer who has not yet read the epigram, the word in the picture is a precondition for understanding the rest of the image. Apart from Medusa's head (carried by Perseus) the *pictura* shows a leaking casket. Another significant detail is the eye on top of the sword. The word 'Hiperborei' seems to be added to make sure that the leaking casket is not misunderstood. It is only in this context, as explained by the epigram, that the combination of Medusa and wine makes sense. To clarify the allegorical significance of Perseus' actions, the illustrator furthermore makes use of conventional iconography, by adding an eye to the sword in Perseus' hand, and the temple of Minerva (a temple with an owl on top of it) in the background. In these details the picture employs a more specific visual language, which is yet another method for creating 'mute poetry'.

This slightly more autonomous relation of image to epigram concerns the use of iconographic language. Although these visual signs are often conventional and as such can be read in a similar way as verbal language they do not conform to a universal code. The signs are sometimes hard to 'read'. An example of this practice is to be found in the emblem 'Heroes divini' (Divine heroes [146]). The picture here shows a crab on the shield of Aeneas' mythical enemy Turnus. The animal on the shield is not referred to in the epigram, which deals with Turnus' retreat during a fight with a phantom of



Fig. 43. Text and iconographic language are part of the *pictura* of 'Persei fabula' (The story of Perseus [127]).

Aeneas. The crab here signifies the movement of walking backwards, thus representing Turnus' flight.⁵⁵ The use of ideograms to depict the ideas expressed in the epigram is a more sophisticated contribution of the designer to the emblematic game than the previously discussed illustrative *picturae*.

Apart from the iconographic translation in the *pictura* of exempla in the epigram, the designer could transform the epigram by inserting new elements. In these cases the picture brings in alternative motifs amplifying the emblematic game. Although the picture still derives its point of departure from the message as formulated in the epigram, the relation between word and image is clearly more complementary than in the previous examples. The ship in the *pictura* of 'Res humanae in summo, declinant' (At their top, human affairs decline [42]) is a case in point (fig. 44).

Here the difficulty of visualising snow leads to the inclusion of a new visual element. A sinking ship in a rough sea represents the end of a prosperous situation. The ship is prominently depicted in the *pictura*, but not mentioned in the epigram. The text only refers to the inconstancy of human existence. As a common symbol for the human condition a ship was a simple solution for the illustrator. Even when people have acquired great wealth they are still not safe from death, who will visit all: "Heu leviter ventus pellit nos omnis inermes, / Concidimus citius quam levat aura rosas" (Alas every wind lightly strikes us, we are defenseless. We fall down more quickly than the wind strips the leaves from roses.)

Another example is given in 'Levitas securae' (Untroubled lightness [182]). In the epigram of this emblem the floating and sinking of light and heavy objects in water epitomises moral flexibility or steadiness, respectively. As a floating piece of wood will keep on floating because of its lightness, Sambucus argues, the vain, lying, capricious flatterer will also manage to stay alive. Those who stick to their principles, however, are more vulnerable.

The picture presents two objects in the water, following the example of the epigram (fig. 45). A light, flat piece of wood is floating, while another is sinking due to the heavy weight placed on it. In

⁵⁵ See Virgil, *Aen.* 10.633–689. In 'Cur sues cancris vescantur' (Why swine eat cancers [55]) the cancer has the same symbolic value: 'gradus retro, quomodo cancer' (walking backwards, like crabs).



Fig. 44. The illustrator added a sinking ship to the *pictura* of ‘Res humanæ in summo, declinant’ (At their top, human affairs decline [42]) to compensate for the difficulty of representing snow.



Fig. 45. In the *pictura* of 'Levitas securā' (Untroubled lightness [182]) the helmet of the man on the right represents both physical weight and a sense of duty.

the foreground of the picture two human figures are depicted in the water. The person on the left does not seem to be in serious trouble; apparently he has steady ground beneath his feet. The man on the right seems to be drowning.

By extending the metaphor of drifting and sinking to a human situation the artist visualised both the example from the world of natural phenomena and the ethical message. The ethical dimension is indicated in a pictorial detail: the drowning man is wearing a helmet, suggesting that the weight of a complete soldier's outfit is pulling him down. The helmet does not only indicate heaviness as a cause for sinking, however, it also symbolises the devotion to duty of the morally upright. In combination with the motto the *pictura* presents an intriguing puzzle to the reader. The image can here play its own part in conveying a message. This does not imply, however, a symbiotic relation between word and image. Although the designer represents the verbal message in a creative way, he still does not establish interaction between the two media. Basically the *pictura* remains a visual representation of the epigram.

Finally, the previously discussed emblem 'Curis tabescimus omnes' (We are all consumed by worries [138], fig. 27) may serve as an example that probably comes nearest to a form of interaction between word and image.⁵⁶ Here the picture provides its own interpretation by quoting Albrecht Dürer's engraving *Melencolia I* (fig. 46). The epigram indirectly warns against the effects of melancholy, which represents both intellectual creativity and pathological destruction. As examples Sambucus relates the death of two scientists both killed, in a way, by their melancholic nature, Pliny the Elder and Empedocles. Pliny died at the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 A.D. Empedocles is said to have killed himself by jumping into the crater of Mount Etna. In the picture not only these two scientists are portrayed, but also the personification of melancholy invented by Dürer.

⁵⁶ See pp. 199–202, 213.



Fig. 46. Detail of the *pictura* of *Curis tabescimus omnes* (see fig. 27), showing the Melancholy figure derived from Albrecht Dürer's 'Melancholia I'.

Thus, the *pictura* points to the core of the emblem by visual means. The reference to Dürer's invention (the winged woman, the *caput manū innixus* gesture, the pair of compasses) symbolically captures both sides of the phenomenon in one figure.⁵⁷ Since the epigram does not make explicit mention of melancholy, the picture interprets the epigram in a distinct way. Even though the reader may have inferred the theme from reading the epigram alone, he would have missed the delightful visual association with Dürer's engraving.

Recapitulating our argument, it can be said that investigating the emblematic relation between word and image is very much a matter of perspective. To the book consumer the emblem at first sight presents itself as a unity of visual and verbal elements. This has often been the point of departure for research into the emblematic nature of the relation between the different components. At the same time, it seems to have delayed a systematic analysis of relations between epigram and *pictura* in concrete emblems. I have argued that such an analysis should preferably be undertaken from the perspective of the construction of the respective constituents. That approach can shed light on the intended interaction between the different parts, and the practical limitations of their synthesis.

The investigation into Sambucus' emblems has shown that in this case unity is an artificial notion. The pictures were produced by at least two different designers, only one of whom Sambucus had known in person. It does not seem likely that there was a close collaboration between the writer and the illustrator. The overwhelming majority of the epigrams do not accommodate the *pictura* in any perceptible form. Even in those cases where the epigram refers to a visible object, it is often not necessary to turn to the concrete *pictura* in order to identify this object. The picture in most cases serves as an illustration of the central, most graphic exemplum of the epigram. The visualisation of the epigrams only occasionally entails the use of ideograms, or the substitution of concepts that could not be visualised by other images.

⁵⁷ On the subject of melancholy and specifically Dürer's engraving, see Panofsky and Saxl, *Dürers Melencolia*.

CONCLUSION

In spite of being a world in itself, “emblematics,” as John Manning concisely put it, “could never be a totally self-pleasing exercise.”¹ This is undeniably true for the humanist emblem, and for those of Joannes Sambucus in particular. Entrenched in the learned world of Renaissance humanism and produced by one of the leading publishing houses of the time, Sambucus’ *Emblemata* is much more than an early specimen of a new literary genre. In this study I have tried to assess Sambucus’ work in its relevant cultural and literary contexts. The investigation has focused on both the characteristics and the functions of the work by first reconstructing the worlds of the author and the publisher, their perspective on the emerging genre and their possible reasons for publishing. Then, the literary characteristics of the emblems have been gauged against this historical background. Rather than adhering to a normative definition of the emblem, a pragmatic and comparative approach has been adopted. The order of composition of the emblems has offered guidance in this investigation. Thus, new light could be thrown on some of the most remarkable aspects of Sambucus’ emblem book.

Taking the producers for a starting-point has also illuminated the role of the *Emblemata* in their respective lives and careers. This was not a very prominent one. Although the publication came at a crucial moment in the career of the humanist and may have helped him initially in establishing his position, there is no indication that the book brought him more fame among his contemporaries than his collecting activities, or his philological and historical works. The dominance of the emblem book over his reputation is indicative of the modern interest in the genre rather than a reflection of the contemporary situation.

The same holds true for the role of Christopher Plantin, for whom the *Emblemata* was the first in a series of renowned editions of emblem books. However, Plantin was more important to the history of the

¹ Manning, *The Emblem*, p. 185.

emblem than the emblem book was to Plantin. In fact, weighed against his publication list the production of emblem books did not make up a substantial part of his printing activities. Moreover, as an analysis of the costs and potential sales has shown, the books did not bring in a substantial profit and cannot really be regarded as best-sellers.

However, there were other practical advantages connected to making emblems. Rather than fulfilling an important commercial or ideological function the book seems to have been an instrument to position its producers within the Republic of Letters. For Sambucus, the dedications in the emblems served as a means of maintaining a friendly relationship with the dedicatee in question. The emblem was an elegant way of paying a compliment to friends and acquaintances. This was not only a matter of gratitude or personal affection, but also an effective form of networking. Sambucus depended on favourable connections, indeed as all other members of the Republic of Letters, for both his scholarly activities and his economic position, as he was still without a secure position at the time the emblems were written. Apart from maintaining individual relations, the emblem book also served as a reputation builder. Once published the emblems became available for a much broader audience than that of the dedicatees alone. Because of the international character of the network, Sambucus' dedication strategy seems to have had a stronger impact than those of other humanist emblematisers, such as Achille Bocchi and Hadrianus Junius. In fact, it still influences Sambucus' reputation in modern scholarship.

These social functions of the emblems were also an asset for Plantin. He could position himself favourably as a printer of this sophisticated and amusing humanist booklet. Moreover, it enabled him to target an elite market which was useful in realising his ambitions as a businessman. Although the setting of each humanist emblem project differs, these social functions are not exclusively reserved to Sambucus' collection, but may well operate in a different way in the case of other emblem books. It would certainly be rewarding to venture a comparative investigation into the relation between the emblem and other forms of occasional poetry, covering for example the contexts of the Bocchian academy and the Dutch network of Hadrianus Junius.

Just like the dedications, the preface 'De emblemate' connects the collection of emblems to the world of its readers. It cannot be

expected, however, to bridge the gap between the book and the *modern* reading public. As I have tried to demonstrate, this text should not in the first place be read as a theorising treatise on the genre. It should rather be seen as part of the author's attempt to present the book to his readership as a learned, useful and amusing form of literature. Such an approach also sheds new light on the reader response authors anticipated.

Finally, the reconstruction of the historical setting in which the *Emblemata* was created has directed the study of its literary form. In practice, this has resulted in recognising the priority of the text over the *pictura*. The message of the emblem is developed in the epigram. In contrast to what is sometimes suggested, Sambucus' epigrams have revealed a tendency towards structural clarity and extensive moralisation. In these respects the emblems are more closely related to the *symbola* of Bocchi than to Alciato's emblems. If the texts may sometimes be difficult to follow, this is often caused by the humanist use of classical sources. The intertextual relations in the epigrams have shown to be an essential part of the emblematic game. As such, the debt of this type of emblem to the Neo-Latin tradition of the epigram can hardly be overstated.

By acknowledging the priority of the text in the emblems, I have not meant to marginalise the worth of the *pictura*. Ultimately, the combination of motto, epigram and *pictura* constituted the emblem. With their sometimes ingenious visualisation of the emblematic message, the *picturae* may in fact have been the most prominent element of the emblem for the readers. However, epigram and *pictura* are seldom connected in a relation of symbiosis, as has often been claimed before. The majority of emblems prove to be illustrated epigrams. In these cases, the *pictura* does not add significantly to the message of the emblem.

To summon up the warning of the Myrmecides emblem introduced at the very beginning of this study, the aspects of the *Emblemata* investigated may serve to show how the work is related to a practical relevance of humanist learning. Being both flexible and learned, the emblem proved to be a highly attractive instrument for the humanist's ideals and ambitions. Accordingly, this investigation could reveal something of the richness of the link between the emblem and the worlds in and for which they were produced.

APPENDIX ONE

CONCORDANCE TO THE EMBLEMS

The numbers in this concordance refer to the page number of the particular emblem. If an emblem takes more than one page this is not indicated. The emblems with a motto in Greek are listed separately after the Latin ones. In those cases where the motto has changed in the editions, a cross reference is given to the final version of the emblem.

	1564	1566	1569
[<i>without title</i>]	—	255	287
Aequitas Senatus	—	234	278
Aequitas	187	161	254
Aesculapius	89	75	84
Alchymiae vanitas	185	159	142
Alterius indigens perpetua ope	163	142	162
Ambitio	119	102	81
Amicitia sordida	201	174	176
Amor dubius	95	80	90
Animi sub vulpe latentes	198	171	155
Antiquitatis studium	191	164	177
Apta recipiunt	156	135	147
Arguit fortuna virum	—	202	220
Ars deluditur arte	42	38	39
Avaritia huius saeculi	197	170	186
Benignitas	39	35	37
Caecum odium	—	210	249
Caelum, non animum mutant	204	177	188
Canis queritur nimium nocere	183	157	172
Caput seditionis tollendum	—	209	247
Casus interdum natura supplet	122	104	114
Caussae investigandae	35	31	33
Caute connivendum principibus	—	214	256
Cedendum, sed non adulandum	192	165	178
Celata virtus ignavia est	—	215	206
Coniugium laborum	—	252	276
Conscia conditio	158	137	149
Conscientia integra. Laurus	14	12	11

Table (*cont.*)

	1564	1566	1569
Conscientia mille testes	—	229	221
Conscius ipse sibi	226	196	209
Consilium	34	30	30
Consuetudo prava	129	110	83
Cur sues cancris vescantur	61	55	59
Cura publica	218	189	199
Curis tabescimus omnes	159	138	150
De oblivione et ferula Baccho dicata	<i>see</i>	Odi memorem	compotorem
De Turcarum Tyranno	—	200	214
Defensio publica	211	183	192
Degeneres	179	153	169
Deum velle, non cogere	87	74	82
Dexter usus	—	203	224
Dicit in aeternis aspera verba Deos	—	250	270
Digamia horrenda	—	253	285
Dii coepta secundant	134	115	122
Discors concordia	188	162	255
Divina humanis non temere miscenda	181	155	171
Divitiae inutiles	52	48	49
Docti ignavos reprehendunt	53	49	50
Dolus an virtus: quis in hoste requirat?	—	239	237
Dolus inevitabilis	58	53	56
Dulce venenum	97	82	74
Dulcia cum amaris	174	150	154
Dum potes vive	76	67	73
Dum vivo prosum	154	133	145
E fisco ne viscum	224	194	204
Empta dolore voluptas	100	85	94
Epidemiae potior caussa	82	71	77
Epitaphium Georgii Bonae Transilvani	228	197	211
Epitaphium Lotichii S	194	167	183
Ex morbo medicina	—	219	229
Exemplo caveto	—	205	260
Expediens impediior. Bombyx	186	160	131
Fatuis levia committito	—	226	258
Felicitas indigna, vel superflua	157	136	148
Fictus amicus	<i>see</i>	Animi sub vulpe	latentes
Fidei canum exemplum	164	143	163
Fides non apparentium	230	199	213
Foeminei sexus querela	225	195	205
Fortissima minimis interdum cedunt	—	227	215
Fortuna Duce	26	22	22
Frontis nulla fides	177	152	168

Table (*cont.*)

	1564	1566	1569
Generosa vestigia	93	79	88
Generosis Marco et Ioanni Fuggeris [...]	78	68	75
Grammat. Dial. Rhetor. [...]	142	121	132
Grandia modo placent	—	232	265
Heroes divini	169	146	128
Ignari artes oderunt. Noctua	—	223	235
Imperatoris virtutes	72	64	69
Importuna adulatio	36	32	34
Imprudens facinus	146	125	107
In copia minor error	19	16	10
In delectu copia	196	169	185
In labore fructus	200	173	175
In morte vita	116	99	110
In poenam sectamur et umbra	—	246	243
In secundis consistere			
laudabile quoque	54	50	52
In sinu alere serpentem	—	249	269
In spe fortitudo	151	130	141
In sponsalia Ioannis Ambii Angli [...]	124	105	—
Industria naturam corrigit	57	52	55
Iniuria gravis est omnibus	85	73	80
Insignia Mercurii quid?	130	111	119
Insignia valent	—	242	280
Interdum requiescendum	137	118	126
Interiora vide	69	61	66
Intestinae simultates	106	179	189
Iocus quaestuosus	—	233	277
Iudicium Paridis	152	131	143
Ius et Philosophia	221	191	181
Laus in fine	45	41	43
Levitas securae	210	182	194
Ludus, luxus, luctus	—	212	252
Malum interdum simili arcendum	20	17	16
Mathiae Corvini Symbolum,	161	140	160
Maximiliano II [...]	[9]	[7]	[9]
Mediocria prosunt	—	204	226
Mediocribus utere partis	—	228	216
Memor utriusque fortunae	13	11	9
Mens immota manet	84	72	79
Minuit praesentia famam	44	40	42
Minus malum eligendum	—	236	273
Mixtus status οὐκ ἄνευ ἄρχοντος πρώτου	108	93	100

Table (*cont.*)

	1564	1566	1569
Moderata conditio	38	34	36
Modulo te tuo metire	—	243	266
Molestia vana	31	27	27
Musarum verae effigies	120	103	113
Mutua et coniuncta	106	91	151
Necessitas dociles facit	101	86	95
Neglecta virescunt	140	120	157
Neminem sors continet sua	91	77	86
Nihil negligendum	205	178	203
Nil omni parte securum	18	15	15
Nimum rebus ne fide secundis	—	241	279
Nimum sapere	32	28	28
Noctuae cur Platano abigantur	212	184	193
Non copia, sed usus prodest	—	211	250
Non dolo, sed virtute	110	94	102
Non in mole sed pectore virtus	138	245	242
Non sine numine divum	—	254	286
Non sufficit ad singula sensus	—	224	236
Nullum malum solum [. . .]	138	119	127
Nullus dolus contra casum	98	83	92
Nusquam est qui ubique est	—	230	222
Nusquam tuta fides	184	158	173
Occasio mali praecavenda	—	240	238
Odi memorem comptorem	80	69	61
Ordo	220	190	201
Otium sortem expectat	107	92	76
Partes hominis	118	101	112
Partium τῆς οἰκουμένης symbola	113	96	106
Patientia laesa fit furor	—	235	271
Periculum auctori nocens	208	180	191
Periculum in promptu	68	60	32
Persei fabula	148	127	137
Physica et Ethica	150	129	139
Physicae ac Metaphysicae differentia	74	65	71
Pietas in amore fideli	—	216	207
Pietatis vis	27	23	23
Plus quam Diomedis et Glauci permutatio	28	24	24
Poena sequens	209	181	190
Poetica	50	46	47
Praecocia non diuturna	117	100	111
Praepostera fides	—	213	253
Pretiosum quod utile	166	144	124

Table (cont.)

	1564	1566	1569
Principum negligentia	216	187	197
Privatum lucrum damnus publicum	160	139	159
Pro ignotis sumere laborem	189	163	174
Providentia omnia reguntur	—	251	275
Prudentibus ministris utendum	—	238	240
Publica privatia potiora	<i>see</i> Privatum lucrum damnus publicum		
Pulchritudo vincit	144	123	134
Quae ante pedes	30	26	26
Quae prosunt non temeranda	17	14	14
Quae sequimur fugimus nosque fugiunt	23	20	19
Quaestus crudelis et perillaeus	—	221	232
Quibus Respublica conservetur	114	97	108
Remedium tempestivum sit	47	43	51
Res humanae in summo declinant	46	42	44
Ridicula ambitio	60	54	58
Sacra ne violato	—	244	268
Sapientia insipiens	103	88	97
Scelus exosum	—	207	244
Secura experientia	—	237	239
Semper ignavus	49	45	46
Sera parsimonia	102	87	96
Simile a simili non laeditur	202	175	180
Simul et semel	135	116	123
Simulata virtus	—	208	245
Sobrie potandum	41	37	40
Sola culpa praestanda	193	166	179
Sors audaces iuvat	43	39	41
Sors ingeniosa	203	176	187
Spes aulica	—	231	263
Spes certa	81	70	65
Spes nunquam futurorum	—	248	283
Studium et labor vincit	170	147	129
Stultitiam celare difficile	—	225	257
Stultitiam patiuntur opes	112	95	104
Subitae divitiae obliuosae	40	36	38
Superfluum inutile	22	19	18
Sus lutulenta sequitur	48	44	45
Sympathia rerum	—	201	218
Tarde venere bubulci	145	124	135
Temeraria ignorantia	66	59	64
Tempestiva prosunt	136	117	125

Table (*cont.*)

	1564	1566	1569
Tempestive cavendum cuique aetati	199	172	156
Tempore cuncta mitiora	104	89	98
Temporis iactura. Ad pilulam	133	114	121
Tirnaviae patriae meae arma	167	145	165
Tolerantia	147	126	136
Tori reverentia	176	151	167
Tyrannus	180	154	170
Universus status, ἡ λαοκρατία	24	21	20
Usus et astutia prosunt	—	222	233
Usus libri, non lectio prudentes facit	62	56	60
Utilitatis ergo. Limax	37	33	35
Varii hominum sensus	65	58	63
Vel levia multitudine clarent	—	247	281
Vel minima offendunt	64	57	62
Vera amicitia	16	13	13
Versura inextricabilis	105	90	99
Victoria cruenta	—	218	228
Vindice fato	—	206	261
Virtus non splendor commendat	—	220	231
Virtus unita valet	70	62	67
Virtute duce	182	156	140
Virtutem honor sequitur	223	193	202
Vita irrequieta	132	113	105
Voluptas aerumnosa	128	109	118
Voluptatis triumphus	172	148	152
Θέλω φρενῶν σταλαγμόν ἢ τύχος πίθον	—	217	227
Μίσανθρωπος Τίμων	126	107	116
Οὐκ ἔστι μιάματος γήρας	214	185	195
Οὐ χρὴ παννύχιον εὔδειν etc.	33	29	29
Πολυπραγμοσύνη	51	47	48
Προδοσέταιρος exosus	56	51	54

APPENDIX TWO

LIST OF DEDICATEES

The name of the dedicatee is given in its most frequently used form. In cases of doubt the Latin variant is used. The page numbers refer to the Latin editions.¹ Names in italics refer to those cases where the dedicatee is addressed in the epigram.

	1564	1566	1569
Aicholtz, Joannes (1520–1588)	150	129	139
<i>Ambius, Joannes—Alba Rollea</i>	<i>124</i>	<i>105</i>	—
Apianus, Philippus (1531–1589)	23	20	19
Arlenius, Arnoldus, see Monoxylus			
Báthory, Andreas (†1566)	—	210	249
<i>Beck von Leopoldsdorf, Hieronymus</i> (†1572)	—	<i>207</i>	<i>244</i>
Breunner, Baron Kaspar von (1530–1570)	—	216	207
<i>Bocchi, Achille</i> (1488–1562)	<i>76</i>	<i>67</i>	<i>73</i>
Bornemissa, Paulus (†1579)	—	244	268
<i>Brutus, Michaël</i> (1516–1594)	<i>230</i>	<i>199</i>	<i>213</i> ²
<i>Camerarius, Joachim</i> (1500–1574)	—	<i>187</i>	<i>197</i> ³
<i>Cardano, Girolamo</i> (1501–1576)	<i>126</i>	<i>107</i>	<i>116</i>
Carreta, Christophorus	—	222	233
Clusius, Carolus (?1524–1609)	156	135	147
Comitibus, Natalis de (1520–1582)	212	184	193
Cruceius, Hannibal (1509–1577)	120	103	113
Dorat, Jean (1504/9–1588)	87	74	82
Draskovic, Juraj (1515–1587)	39	35	37
Dudith, Andreas (1533–1589)	38	34	36
<i>Egerer, Coloman</i>	—	<i>243</i>	<i>266</i>
<i>Ferdinand I, emperor</i> (1503–1564)	<i>(108)</i>	<i>(93)</i>	<i>(100)</i> ⁴

¹ For a concordance to the dedications in the French and Dutch editions, see Voet-Persoons, *De Emblemata van Joannes Sambucus* vol. 1, 28–30.

² The personal address is added from the second edition onwards.

³ The personal address is added from the second edition onwards.

⁴ This emblem ‘Mixtus status οὐκ ἄνευ ἄρχοντος πρώτου’ (A mixed constitution cannot do without a prime leader) lacks a dedication in the proper sense, but addresses the emperors Ferdinand I (who died in July 1564) and Maximilian II.

Table (*cont.*)

	1564	1566	1569
<i>Ferrari, Octavianus (1518–1586)</i>	201	174	176
Forgách, Ferenc (1530/35–1577)	65	58	63
Fugger, Jakob (1542–1598)	—	241	279
<i>Fugger, Johann (1531–1598)</i>	78	68	75 ⁵
<i>Fugger, Markus (1529–1597)</i>	78	68	75 ⁶
Fumano, Adamo (†1587)	163	142	162
Gentile, Stephano	98	83	92
Giphanius, Obertus (1533–1604)	—	223	235
Goltzius, Hubertus (1526–1583)	113	96	106
Goropius Becanus, Joannes (1518–1572)	—	203	224
Gulielmus, Hadrianus	85	73	80
Haller, Wolfgang (?†1591)	—	254	286
Hamel, Pasquier du (†1565)	28	24	24
<i>Harrach, Leonard (IV) von (1514–1590)</i>	—	226	258
Hartung, Joannes (1505–1579)	159	138	150
Hosszúthóthy, György (?1525–1587)	—	206	261
Istvánffy, Nicolaus (1538–1615)	192	165	178
<i>Junius, Hadrianus (1511–1575)</i>	140	120	157
Khevenhüller, Johann (1538–1606)	—	229	221
Lambin, Denys (c. 1520–1572)	50	46	47
Laurinus, Marcus (1530–1581)	196	169	185
<i>Lazius, Wolfgang (1514–1565)</i>	89	75	84
Ligorius, Petrus (c. 1510–1583)	137	118	126
Listhy, Joannes (†1578)	205	178	203
Manutius, Paulus (1511–1574)	116	99	109
Maphaeus, Achilles	166	144	124
Maranta, Bartholomeus (?1500–1571)	182	156	140
Marliani, Bartolomeo (†1560)	66	59	64
Mattioli, Pietro Andrea (1501–1578)	—	201	218
<i>Maximilian II, Emperor (1527–1576)</i>	9	[7]	9 ⁷
Mesmes, Henri de (1532–1596)	136	117	125
<i>Monoxylus Arlenius, Arnoldus (c. 1510–1581)</i>	103	88	97
Muretus, Marcus Antonius (1526–1585)	197	170	186
Musler, Georgius	—	246	243

⁵ This concerns an interpretation of the coat of arms of the Fugger family.

⁶ This concerns an interpretation of the coat of arms of the Fugger family.

⁷ The dedicatory emblem is addressed to Maximilian exclusively. In ‘Mixtus status οὐκ ἄνευ ἄρχοντος πρώτου’ (A mixed constitution cannot do without a prime leader) he is addressed together with his father, emperor Ferdinand; similarly, he is also addressed in ‘Mathiae Corvini Symbolum, Symbolo Ioan. Regis auctum’ (Symbols of Matthias Corvinus and king Joannes).

Table (cont.)

	1564	1566	1569
Oláh, Nicolaus (1493–1568)	—	240	238
<i>Oporinus, Joannes (1507–1568)</i>	—	247	281
<i>Orsini, Fulvio (1529–1600)</i>	62	56	60
Palearius, Aonius (1504–1570)	221	191	181
Pancirola, Guido (1523–1599)	—	234	278
Panithy, Joannes (†c. 1565)	101	86	95
Peraxylus, Arnoldus, see Monoxylus			
<i>Pigna, Joannes Baptista (1529/30–1575)</i>	170	147	129
Plantin, Christopher (c. 1520–1589)	—	231	263
<i>principes Ungariae</i>	70	62	67
Pruymer, Casparus, see Breunner			
Ramus, Petrus (1515–1572)	214	185	195
Rasarius, Joannes Baptista (1517–1578)	82	71	77
Rechnicz, Daniel	—	217	227
Rechnicz, Vitus	22	19	18
<i>Robortellus, Franciscus (1516–1567)</i>	106	91	151
Romoli, Bartolomeo (†1588)	—	183	192
<i>Salm, Julius Graf zu (1531–1595)</i>	93	79	88
Sambucus, Petrus (1500–1565)	184	158	173
Sbardellatus, Andreas, see Dudith			
Schwambach, Johann Andreas von	—	228	216
Sigionio, Carlo (1523–1584)	142	121	132
Sirletus, Guilelmus (1514–1585)	191	164	177
Sophianus, Michaël (†1565)	31	27	27
Stadius, Achilles (1524–1584)	177	152	168
<i>Sturm, Johann (1507–1589)</i>	—	190	201
Tanner, Georgius (†1580/1581)	189	163	174
<i>Tonner, Joannes</i>	—	113 & 248	105 & 283
Torda, Sigismundus	—	[239]	237
<i>Turnèbe, Adrien (1512–1565)</i>	130	111	119
Utenhovius, Carolus (1536–1600)	—	65	71
<i>Verantius, Anthonius (1505–1573)</i>	223	193	202 ⁸
<i>Vettori, Pietro (1499–1584)</i>	218	189	199
<i>Weber, Johann Baptist (1526–1584)</i>	—	202	219
Winnenberg, Philipp von	—	235	271
Wolfius, Hieronymus (1516–1580)	26	22	22
<i>Žasy, Johann Ulrich (1521–1570)</i>	—	238	240
Zermegh, Joannes (c. 1504–1584)	—	237	23
Zott von Pernegg, Christoph Philipp	—	245	242

⁸ The personal address in the epigram is added from the second edition onwards.

APPENDIX THREE

RELATIONS BETWEEN EPIGRAM AND *PICTURA*

<i>Explicit references to the pictura</i>		<i>Visual effects (apostrophe or prosopopeia)</i>	
Aesculapius	75	Animi sub vulpe latentes ¹	171
Alchymiae vanitas	159	Antiquitatis studium	164
Avaritia huius saeculi	170	Caecum odium ²	210
Dexter usus	203	Canis queritur nimium nocere	157
Dulcia cum amaris	150	Casus interdum natura supplet	104
Epitaphium Lotichii S	167	Conscientia integra, laurus	12
Felicitas indigna, vel superflua	136	Cura publica	189
Fidei canum exemplum	143	Degeneres <i>Theca loquitur</i>	153
Fortuna Duce	22	Dum potes vive	67
Grammat Dial Rhetor Historiae differentia	121	Dum vivo prosum	133
Imperatores virtutes	64	Expediens impediior Bombyx	160
In labore fructus	173	Foeminei sexus querela	195
In morte vita	99	Grandia modo placent	232
In secundis consistere laudabile quoque	50	Heroës divini	146
Insignia Mercurii quid?	111	Ignari artes oderunt Noctua	223
Maximiliano II [etc]	[7]	In copia minor error	16
Physicae ac Metaphysicae differentia	65	Industria naturam corrigit	52
Pietas in amore fideli	216	Interiora vide ³	61
Pretiosum quod utile	144	Malum interdum simili arcendum	17
Voluptatis triumphus	148	Molestia vana	27
		Poetica	46
		Praepostera fides ⁴	213

¹ This emblem is entitled 'Fictus amicus' in the 1564 edition.

² The apostrophe to the Cyclops Polyphemus (l 6) is not represented in the *pictura*.

³ This emblem does not entirely fit in this category. The epigram addresses a young man commenting on his physical appearance. The effect is similar to that of an apostrophe.

⁴ Epigram by Janus Pannonius (1434–1472). See Pannonius' *opera omnia* (Vienna: C Stainhofer, 1569 [facsimile reproduction Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1972]) edited by Sambucus, fol XLVIIIro.

Principum negligentia	187	<i>De oblivione et ferula Baccho dicata</i>	
Superfluum inutile	19	Odi memorem compotorem	69
Temporis iactura <i>Ad pilulam</i>	114	De Turcarum Tyranno	200
Usus, non lectio prudentes		Defensio publica	183
facit	56	Deum velle, non cogere	74
Utilitatis ergo, limax	33	Dicit in aeternos aspera verba	
Versura inextricabilis ⁵	90	Deos	250
Voluptas aerumnosa	109	Digamia horrenda	253
		Dii coepta secundant	115
<i>No connection to the concrete pictura</i>		Discors concordia	162
[without title]	255	Divina humanis non temere	
Aequitas Senatus	234	miscenda	155
Aequitas	161	Divitiae inutiles	48
Alterius indigens perpetua ope	142	Docti ignavos reprehendunt	49
Ambitio	102	Dolus an virtus quis in hoste	
Amicitia sordida	174	requirat?	239
Amor dubius	80	Dolus inevitabilis	53
Apta recipiunt	135	Dulce venenum	82
Arguit fortuna virum	202	E fisco ne viscum	194
Ars deluditur arte	38	Empta dolore voluptas	85
Benignitas	35	Epidemiae potior caussa	71
Caelum, non animum mutant	177	Epitaphium Georgii Bonae	
Caput seditionis tollendum	209	Transilvani	197
Caussae investigandae	31	Ex morbo medicina Horat	
Caute connivendum principibus	214	Sat ii	219
Cedendum, sed non adulandum	165	Exemplo caveto	205
Celata virtus ignavia est	215	Fatuis levia committito	226
Coniugium laborum ⁶	252	Fides non apparentium	199
Conscia conditio	137	Fortissima minimis interdum	
Conscientia mille testes	229	cedunt	227
Conscius ipse sibi	196	Frontis nulla fides	152
Consilium	30	Generosa vestigia	79
Consuetudo prava	110	Generosis DD Marco et	
Cur sues cancris vescantur	55	Ioanni Fuggeris fratribus	68
Curis tabescimus omnes	138	Importuna adulatio	32

⁵ This is a borderline case. The epigram about making debts is written in the first person, but it clearly does not reflect the author's real-life situation. The epigram evokes the presence of an almost farcical persona lamenting its financial position.

⁶ The word 'symbolum' in 1.3 does not present a visual phenomenon here, but refers to a historical situation. There is a considerable narrative distance to the example, a wedding habit of the ancient Germans: 'Theutonum laudabilis fuit sacri mos coniugii [...] (The Germans had a praiseworthy habit for the sacred marriage [...]).

Imprudens facinus	125	Non copia sed usus prodest	211
In delectu copia	169	Non dolo, sed virtute	94
In poenam sectamur et umbra	246	Non in mole sed pectore virtus	245
In sinu alere serpentem	249	Non sine numine divūm	254
In spe fortitudo	130	Non sufficit ad singula sensus	224
In sponsalia [. . .] ⁷	105	Nullum malum solum, vel uno	
Iniuria gravis est omnibus	73	bono sublato mille existunt	119
Insignia valent	242	Nullus dolus contra casum	83
Interdum requiescendum	118	Nusquam est qui ubique est	230
Intestinae simultates	179	Nusquam tuta fides	158
Iocus quaestuosus	233	Occasio mali praecavenda	240
Iudicium Paridis	131	Ordo	190
Ius et Philosophia	191	Otium sortem expectat	92
Laus in fine	41	Partes hominis	101
Levitas securā	182	Partium τῆς οἰκουμένης	
Ludus, luxus, luctus	212	symbola ⁹	96
Mathiae Corvini Symbolum,		Patientia laesa fit furor	235
Symbolo Ioan Regis auctum	140	Periculum auctori nocens	180
Mediocria prosunt	204	Periculum in promptu	60
Mediocribus utere partis	228	Persei fabula	127
Memor utriusque fortunae	11	Physica et Ethica	129
Mens immota manet	72	Pietatis vis	23
Minuit praesentia famam	40	Plus quam Diomedis et Glauci	
Minus malum eligendum	236	permutatio	24
Mixtus status οὐκ ἄνευ		Poena sequens	181
ἄρχοντος πρώτου	93	Praecocia non diuturna	100
Moderata conditio	34	Privatum lucrum damnum	
Modulo te tuo metire	243	publicum ¹⁰	139
Mutua et coniuncta	91	Pro ignotis sumere laborem	163
Necessitas dociles facit ⁸	86	Providentia omnia reguntur	251
Neglecta virescunt	120	Prudentibus ministris utendum	238
Neminem sors continet sua	77	Pulchritudo vincit	123
Nihil negligendum	178	Quae ante pedes	26
Nil omni parte securum	15	Quae prosunt non temeranda	14
Nimium rebus ne fide secundis	241	Quae sequimur fugimus	
Nimium sapere	28	nosque fugiunt	20
Noctuae cur Platano abigantur	184	Quaestus crudelis et perillaeus	221

⁷ This emblem is only present in the first two editions of the *Emblemata*.

⁸ 'Cernis' in l 7 can be taken as an invitation to imagine the act of birds drinking, but does not refer to a concrete situation represented in the *pictura*.

⁹ The epigram sums up the symbols for the respective continents, without explicit references to a visual representation: 'Ergo sit [. . .] insigne [. . .]' (Let therefore be [. . .] the mark for [. . .]).

¹⁰ A new version of 'Publica privatis potiora' in the 1564 edition. The motto and epigram are new, but of the same tenor.

Quibus Respublica conservetur	97	Tempestiva prosunt	117
Remedium tempestivum sit	43	Tempestive cavendum cuique	
Res humanae in summo		aetati	172
declinant	42	Tempore cuncta mitiora	89
Ridicula ambitio	54	Tirnaviae patriae meae arma ¹²	145
Sacra ne violato	244	Tolerantia	126
Sapientia insipiens	88	Tori reverentia	151
Scelus exosum	207	Tyrannus	154
Secura experientia	237	Universus status, ἡ λαοκρατία	21
Semper ignavus	45	Usus et astutia prosunt	222
Sera parsimonia	87	Varii hominum sensus	58
Simile a simili non laeditur	175	Vel levia multitudine clarent	247
Simul et semel	116	Vel minima offendunt	57
Simulata virtus	208	Vera amicitia ¹³	13
Sobrie potandum	37	Victoria cruenta	218
Sola culpa praestanda	166	Vindice fato	206
Sors audaces iuvat	39	Virtus non splendor commendat	220
Sors ingeniosa	176	Virtus unita valet	62
Spes aulica	231	Virtute duce	156
Spes certa	70	Virtutem honor sequitur	193
Spes nunquam futurorum	248	Vita irrequieta	113
Studium et labor vincit ¹¹	147		
Stultitiam celare difficile	225	Μίσανθρωπος Τίμων	107
Stultitiam patiuntur opes	95	Οὐ χρή παννύχιον εὔδειν etc	29
Subitae divitiae obliviosae	36	Οὐκ ἔστι μιάσματος γῆρας	185
Sus lutulenta sequitur	44	Πολυπραγμοσύνη	47
Sympathia rerum	201	Προδοσέταιρος exosus	51
Tarde venere bubulci	124	Θέλω φρενῶν σταλαγμόν ἢ	
Temeraria ignorantia	59	τύχος πίθον	217

¹¹ This is a borderline case. The example of this epigram, a casket, is introduced without a demonstrative signal, but clearly presented: 'Est vas quod capitur, rite iuvans auriculis suis' (There is a vat that is being held, correctly helping with its handles).

¹² Although the lemma suggests otherwise, the emblem is not exclusively focussed on the Tirnavian coat of arms. The epigram does not give an explicit visual reference to the coat of arms, but describes and explains it within the context of the city's history.

¹³ The description in the first line does not refer explicitly to a visual situation: 'Et caelo et terra manibus cor utrinque tenetur [. . .]' (With the hand both from heaven and earth a heart is being held . . .).

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